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THE
FALSE STEP.
VOL. I.



THE
FALSE STEP;
OR
THE HISTORY
OF
MRS. BRUDENEL.
A NOVEL.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

L O N D O N :

Printed for J. ALMON, opposite BURLINGTON
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THE

FALSHET

OF

THE HISTORY

OF

M. BRUDNELL

A NOVEL



IN THE

VOL. I

LONDON

Printed and Published by J. ALMON, at the Theatre Royal, in Pall Mall.

THE
FALSE STEP, &c.

LETTER I.

Miss Hamilton to Miss Sommers.

I Have, at last, consented, Patty—
Who can for ever refuse the man
she loves? especially *such* a man—
Besides, Mr. Bever has acted in a
very honourable manner, for he al-
ways declared his inability to mar-
ry me publickly, though he has a
thousand times told me, that he
wished, from his soul, he had not
been under a necessity of having re-
course to clandestine proceedings—

Vol. I.

B

Could

Could I then any longer refuse to make the man, who has given me so many proofs of his sincere affection, happy?

You will not hear from me again 'till all is over: I shall then hope to see you at the apartments which Mr. Bever has ordered to be got ready for me—I will let you know when I come to town—I have had a good deal of courage, I think, to go thus far: my heart now begins to flutter, and I am troubled with strange apprehensions.—But I give my terrors to the wind——Bever comes—I devote myself to *him* and joy.

L E T T E R II.

Miss Sommers to Miss Hamilton.

IF you have not yet carried your foolish, indiscreet, and indeed ruinous design into execution, stop, Lucy, and reflect upon the consequences

quences with which the execution of it may be attended.—Consider what you are about.—Could I have believed that *you*, that *you* who have hitherto acted with uncommon prudence, would venture to throw yourself into the power of a man without the approbation of your family, nay, without even consulting them, I should have written to you, to dissuade you from your purpose, long ago.—

You have often, it is true, told me, that you loved Mr. Bever, but you also told me that you would see him no more, if he did not behave in the most open and honourable manner, but endeavour to conquer your inclination for him, as you could not give it encouragement to conquer you, without discovering the most censurable weakness.—

How came you then, my dear, so suddenly to resolve on consenting to a private marriage, with a man

who cannot have any good intentions, by wishing to have recourse to clandestine proceedings. He is his own master, he is possessed of a large estate ; he is totally independent—He may, perhaps, I will allow, be apprehensive of the ridicule of the world, if he marries a woman of no birth nor fortune ; but I am much afraid that he is urged by an inherent aversion to matrimony, and by a strong desire to gain you upon his own terms, to attempt to draw you from your father's house ; to draw you from the protection of your best friends.—By *his* mode of behaviour, he can only study the gratification of his own inordinate wishes ; he cannot have the slightest regard for *your* character or peace.—As to what he has mentioned to you concerning his uncle, I would, by no means, have you listen to it ; *that* uncle may not, perhaps, leave him a shilling,

ling, as he has two sons and a daughter of his own.—No—an elopement with Mr. Bever cannot be safely thought of.—When he has obtained his point, you will, it is highly probable, find yourself grossly deceived.—Besides, my dear Lucy, supposing Mr. Bever means to do every thing in the most unexceptionable manner, how can a girl, brought up as *you* have been, in so modest and reserved a way, venture upon such a long journey with a man who will plume himself on having taken advantage of her confidence in him, by pleading the violence of his passion for her.—Stop, therefore, my dear Lucy, if you set any value on your reputation, on your own happiness, or on the happiness of those related to you, and give up at once a man who treats you so unworthily, by prompting you to adopt a measure so injurious to you in every respect.—

spect.——I have a great deal more to say to you upon this very interesting subject ; but I check my pen, lest my letter should come too late to your hands to prevent the mischief apprehended, with extreme concern apprehended, by

Your very sincere and
affectionate Friend,
M. SOMMERS.

L E T T E R. III.

Miss Hamilton to Miss Sommers.

PATTY, Patty, my dear Patty !
I am undone, ruined forever—
I want words to acquaint you with what I suffer at this moment.—I thought, however, to have endeavoured to write a circumstantial account of my own imprudent actions, and of the treacherous arts which have been practised against me ; but I am too ill,—Had you
been

been in London, I would have flown to you for protection—but, now—'tis too late—I cannot now ask, I cannot expect your father, (good as he has been to you, who have ever, indeed, merited the kindest treatment from him) who is reckoned a rigid man, to receive a poor undone girl, with a broken heart, and a blasted character, into his family, to the prejudice of his daughter, when my own father will not, look upon me, will not suffer me to enter his doors.—Undutiful children, Patty, are very undeserving, but hard-hearted parents are very cruel.—I cannot write any more—my spirits sink—my head turns round—Good heaven! what will become of me!—Write soon to me, at Mr. Brudenel's, in Park-street.——Miserable beyond expression as my situation is, I am still, Your truly affectionate,

L. HAMILTON.

B 4

LET-

L E T T E R IV.

Miss Sommers to Miss Hamilton.

MY fears have been verified, my poor Lucy, and you have been betrayed. — My heart bleeds for you—Whither have you been carried?—What has happened to you?—Where is that Bever? — I was going to add something more, but I am still in the dark.—You are not with *him*, I find.—Would to heaven that I could assist you, that I could take you in, my Lucy! —However cheated, you should find a friend in *me*, were I my own mistress; but you know my father sufficiently—He means well, tho' he may carry his severity too far. —Have we not all our failings?

I cannot do what I would for you, my sweet girl; but as I have saved a little out of my allowance
for

for cloaths and pocket-money, *that* shall be at *your* service, if you will favour me with fuller directions, and tell me in what manner I shall convey it to you.—Write to me, therefore, and be not ashamed to unfold every secret of your heart to me—You have been led into imprudences, by giving ear to the insinuating accents of a seducing lover ; but you have not, I dare venture to assert, been willingly guilty of a capital indiscretion—You have a gentle heart, replete with sensibility ; your sensibility has ruined you, my friend.—Give me immediately an opportunity to assist you. I will assist you to the utmost of my power. You do not, I hope, encourage the least suspicion with regard to the *steadiness* as well as the sincerity of,

Your affectionate Friend,
M. SOMMERS.

L E T T E R V.

Miss Hamilton to Miss Sommers.

AFTER a fortnight's confinement, by a violent fever, I am able to take my pen, and thank my Patty for the affection she has discovered for me : I hope also to be able to give her a more particular account of myself : but I must do it gradually. — I am better, but I am still very much out of order. — I never shall be well again ; I don't wish to be well again ; I wish to die — I am not, indeed, fit to live, because I cannot tear from my heart the man who has so cruelly betrayed me. — O Patty ! can I possibly still love Bever ? — Do not be offended with me : when you hear my story, you will pity me ; I know you will. — I shall begin it, and
write

write it by degrees, as I find myself in a condition to proceed.

As to your kind and generous offer, my good friend, I do not at present stand in need of your pecuniary assistance ; I am amply provided for : your *little all*, for the offer of which I am doubly obliged to you, because it is your *all*, cannot enable me to repay the favours which I have received, which I still receive against my inclination. — Were I not assured that I shall soon die, I would make one bold effort to get from hence ;—but to what place can I fly ?—Who will receive me ? Who will take me in ? Who will look upon such a girl as I am, after what has twice happened to me ?

In Continuation.

I Find myself a little better : I will now, therefore, try to begin my sad story.

Every thing had been settled between me and Bever, before your last letter came to my hands : it did not come to them till I was stepping out at the door, and I hurried it into my pocket, thinking I should have leisure enough to look into it upon the road.—Unfortunate hurry ! fatal delay !—Yet, had I staid to read it, had I read it, I was so thoroughly assured of Bever's honour, so infatuated indeed with my affection for him, that I should not have paid, I fear, the attention to it which it deserved.—However, I did not open it, but met Bever at the end of the street, who hastily put me into a post-chaise, and gave the driver orders to be as expeditious as possible.—He received me with so transported an air, and discovered so much delicate satisfaction on having secured me for ever, that I felt little less delight than himself ; and nothing but my concern

cern at leaving my father and mother, my sister, and *you*, my Patty, made me feel any reluctance ; and even that reluctance so natural, so laudable in the child, the sister, and the friend, was soon extinguished by the extreme tenderness of my lover.—Why, O why, are our passions ever too strong to be controuled by reason, at some particular times ?—At those times, when the corrections of reason are the most necessary, in order to keep them properly subdued !—But, to what purpose do I now complain ?—Repentance comes too late.—I cannot recall what is past : yet I must enter upon the narration of it.—My lover, my friend, as I then thought him, my all, was so attentive to my every look and motion, so assiduous to please, that I thought of nothing but the felicity I should enjoy, in being the wife of a man so very dear to me ; and
the

the modest apprehensions of a girl in such a situation, were my only embarrassments—yet, as Bever highly commended me for my apprehensions, and declared himself pleased with my *charming bashfulness*, to use his own words, I had, apparently, all the reason in the world to be content.—During the endearments which he bestowed on me—endearments as refined as they were affectionate—he pointed out to me every beautiful view, every little smiling spot, which merited my notice, while we travelled together.

Our breakfast was elegant, our dinner perfectly genteel; but when we stopped at the last stage for the night, the supper-table was covered with a profusion of delicacies, which I could not have expected at an inn.—I have since thought, that those delicacies were sent thither before us, in order to facilitate the execution of the projected design
against

against me, especially as Mr. Bever insisted upon my drinking more wine than I chose, declaring that it was light and small, and would very much relieve me after the fatigue of my journey.—I had, however, fortitude enough to refuse what I feared might prove intoxicating to one so unaccustomed to drink wine as I was. By that fortitude, I found myself capable of making resistance to a number of liberties which were, in my opinion, highly improper; though he urged that he had a right to expect the indulgences which he required from me.—I soon afterwards looked upon him with horror.—At last, with much difficulty, I disengaged myself from his arms, and retired to the room which the chambermaid shewed me.

Having fastened the door as soon as the chambermaid was gone, I
went

went to bed, and tried to compose myself ; but my fluttered spirits—luckily for me—would not suffer me to close my eyes.

When I had been a-bed about an hour, I heard a noise, and soon found that somebody approached me. I was a good deal alarmed, as I had never lain at an inn before ; and at that instant was thoroughly shocked at the impropriety of my being *there*.

In a very short time, upon my calling out, “ Who are you ? ” Mr. Bever replied, in a manner which induced me to imagine that he had the worst intentions with regard to me ; and after having, in the most insinuating accents, intreated me to permit him to remain with me the rest of the night, assured me, in order to quicken my compliance, that women so near an union with their lovers, were not usually so unwilling to occupy the same apartments
with

with them upon the road : adding, that he was certain I would not have framed any objection to his request, if I had known any person who had been upon such a journey.

I can hardly tell you the answer I returned—my astonishment and terror would have, perhaps, kept me silent, had he not almost stifled me with his caresses.—I struggled with him—exerted all my strength; but finding, at length, that all my strength was insufficient, I burst into a flood of tears : tears only at that time, I believe, could have saved me. My anguish was indeed so great, on being so cruelly deceived by the man whom I almost adored, and whom I still loved, though he had acted so dishonourable a part, that I was hardly able to breathe, so excessive was my grief; and he was obliged to make use of remedies to prevent my falling a victim to his indelicacy, instead

stead of attempting to inspire me with love enough to forward the accomplishment of his wishes.—

Thus, Patty, the extremity of my distress rescued me from violation, and I prevailed on him to leave me, at least till I recovered my spirits—

No sooner did I find myself alone, than I determined to escape, if possible, from him, to return home, and never to leave my father's house without his concurrence. This was my immediate determination, but I soon was aware of the obstacles which I should encounter to retard, if not entirely to hinder the execution of it.—To say the truth, I was not heartily inclined to extricate myself from the difficulties which surrounded me.—I must own, Patty—with blushes is my confession accompanied—that though I was exceedingly shocked at the treatment
I had.

I had met with from the man in whom I had ventured to place the greatest confidence, I felt a regret not to be expressed at my being necessitated to give up all thoughts of *this* man for ever.—She, only, my dear friend, who has loved like me, can tell what I endured, when I beheld the destruction of all my flattering schemes; when all my hopes of happiness were demolished.—Could I, after such a behaviour, trust myself any longer in my lover's power?

I sat near two hours quite overwhelmed with grief, and terrified to think of my helpless condition, before I could rouse myself to act with the spirit and the dispatch which so trying an occasion demanded.—But I must stop here.—The dreadful recollection of past sufferings operates so powerfully upon my mind, that I cannot go on.

In

In Continuation.

AS soon as I could collect my scattered thoughts together, I began to see pretty plainly, that there was not a moment to be lost. I was sufficiently encouraged to believe that Bever would return, and frustrate every design I could form for my escape : I therefore bustled, as well as I was able, to put on the remainder of my cloaths (for I had till then sat on the side of my bed, having quitted it as soon as I could, almost in a state of stupefaction). It was a moon-light night ; I went softly down stairs, and then into the street, luckily without being observed ; several people were indeed up, and stirring about, to accommodate some company who had arrived late, but they were too busy to attend to me.—I walked away as fast as I could,

could, weak as I was, from being extremely indisposed : I was now terrified in a new way : I was alone, in a strange place, and at an unusual hour : every noise alarmed me, for every noise made me apprehensive of a pursuit.—Bever, I imagined, or some other person equally bent on my ruin, was plotting to seize me.—After having been so dreadfully deceived by Bever, could I place a confidence in any other man ?

Quickening my pace, and keeping the high road for fear of losing myself, I was fortunately, by break of day, overtaken by a stage-coach going to London. The coachman seeing me walk very feebly, (I was indeed, by that time, almost ready to sink, from the fatigue which I had endured, and from the various painful emotions by which I was agitated) — asked me if I would get into the coach. I gladly accepted

cepted of his offer, telling him that I had money enough to pay for my passage. — My appearance, I suppose, was in my favour, or he would not have been so complaisant to me.

There were only in the coach an old man, who looked like one of the lowest sort of farmers, and his wife : they were just civil, without being troublesome ; and I wanted nothing, at that time, from any body but common civility.

No remarkable incidents happened during my journey ; and my thoughts were too much engaged, to be called off by trivial occurrences. — Hardly did I seem to have either eyes or ears. Now and then I pleaded illness, to apologize for my inattention ; and I was really ill.

When I came to London it was late : the inn to which the coach carried us, was at a considerable distance

distance from my father's. It rained also exceedingly.—To complete my distress, no hackney-coach could be secured for a great while. One at last was found, and I threw myself into it, with a heart fluttered at once by hope and fear.

When the coach stopped at my father's, the family were all in bed; the coachman knocked hard at the door: At last, my sister—Oh Patty, can I call her a sister!—opened a window, saying that the family were asleep, and expected no body at that time of night.—I put my head out, and begged her, for the love of heaven, to let me in —She not only positively refused to give me admittance, but added, —“ My father and mother know very well with whom you went away; they will never see you again; and they have charged *me*, as I value their affection, never to speak to you, nor love you any more.”—
Then,

Then, flapping down the window, she disappeared, and I was left to the anguish of my own sorrow, which was now so intense, that it almost drove me to distraction.—I wrung my hands and wept: the coachman asked me repeatedly, whither I would be carried?—I was too much afflicted to inform him; I could not indeed tell him how to proceed.—He then, finding me unable to answer his questions, mounted his box —“ I have something else to do, said he, than to stay waiting upon *you*.”

While he was driving me furiously back to the place where he had taken me up, one of his hind-wheels suddenly flew off, and he was obliged to make a full stop.—Coming up to me, he told me, in a surly tone, that I must get out, as he could not carry me any farther.

The rain was by this time abated, but what could I do? whither could

could I go? My father's door was shut against me—dreadful reflection!—I was indeed so totally oppressed with shame, so severely stung by remorse that I was incapable of speaking. The coachman not paying any regard to my distress, grew very noisy:—I quitted the coach, and put my hand in my pocket to pay him.—At that instant a man passing by, stood still, and looking earnestly at me by the light of a lamp, asked me whither I was going; adding that he would take care of me home.

Reflecting entirely on my miserable situation, I did not, at first, attend to him. He roused me by snatching hold of my hand, and pulling me along.—I then started, and desired him to leave me.

Prythee, child, replied he, don't
be coy ; you are not going into any
house here, and, therefore, I will
take you to the next tavern, and
Cgive

give you a supper. Come, come, my dear, that pretty mouth of yours was never made to say no.

You may be sure, Patty, that I was both hurt by such an address, and angry at it; yet I at the same moment said to myself, what right have I to be offended with this behaviour? after having so degraded myself, can I expect better treatment from any other man?—However, I strove with all my strength, to get away from him, but to no purpose, he redoubled his importunities, and still continued to pull me after him. The coachman was clamorous for his fare which I was very ready to pay him.—I, therefore, told my tormentor, I insisted upon his leaving me at liberty to use my hands, that I might take out my purse: He then threw half a crown to the coachman and desired him not to be impertinent.

Just

Just at that instant a gentleman came up to us. Hoping for some assistance from him, I raised my voice in order to attract his attention.—He accosted me in a very polite manner, offered his service, and intreated me to command him.

I only beg to be left to myself, Sir; said I.

Let the lady act as she pleases, Sir, said he, to the troublesome fellow who held my hands.—Don't be alarmed, madam, added he; put yourself under *my* protection; I will defend you at the hazard of my life.

I was not quite capable of determining what to do, but I was sufficiently in my senses to see that the *first* man was *brutal*, and the *last* humane and gentle in his carriage; in consequence of that discovery I scrupled not to say that I should be glad if he would prevent my being insulted.

C 2

He

He then directed a few words to the other, which, though I could not hear them distinctly, obliged him to relinquish his hold, but he went away muttering in the language of a disappointed bully. — The coachman also took himself away in order to get somebody to put his coach to rights.

When the stranger and I were left by ourselves, I began to be terrified with new apprehensions: immediately perceiving my fear he endeavoured, without delay, to dispell them, telling me that he would get another coach and carry me home on my informing him where I lived.

I could now conceal my distressful condition no longer—My sighs increased, my tears flowed faster than ever, and I exclaimed—I have *no* home—I am a poor, wretched creature——wretched beyond expression—Yet do not, Sir, continued

tinued I, do not, if you have any humanity, take advantage of my unfortunate situation—— I have not been guilty of any criminal action, indeed I have not, though my appearance in this place and at this hour may prejudice you against me—Conduct me, if you please, to some reputable house till I can think upon methods to gain a subsistence.

Here I paused. My painful emotions hindered me from proceeding. The gentleman who had all this time fixed his eyes upon me, said softly, poor creature, and then aloud, don't afflict yourself, madam ; I will take care of you— You shall never be under obligations to any body for a subsistence— Be comforted, I intreat you.

He then called a watchman, who was at a little distance, and bade him call a coach.

A coach soon appeared—My protector offered me his hand to assist me in getting into it—I was so weak, and so dispirited that I could not help myself; he, therefore, lifted me in, seated himself by me, and perceiving that I was ready to faint, threw his arm round me to support me.

We at length stopped at his house—I was scarce sensible of any thing that had past by the way: I only remembered that my companion now and then spoke to me in an humane, rather affectionate manner; that he desired me to lean on him, that he pressed my hands tenderly, and that he begged me to believe he would do every thing in his power to relieve me.

When he took me out of the coach, I was incapable of speaking; when he carried me into the house I fainted.

On

On my opening my eyes I saw my protector very busy about me, administering remedies for my recovery.—A decent, good-looking woman I also beheld, assisting him: the sight of such a person was very agreeable to me—She pressed me to retire, and to try to take some rest. I made no answer—I was afraid to go to bed in a strange house, in which there was a man too, having lately had so narrow an escape, yet I felt myself utterly unable to sit up.—On the gentleman's saying, I will only wait upon you to your chamber, madam, and then leave you to your repose, I consented to go to it, leaning upon his friendly arm.—He led me up with a tenderness extremely flattering to me in my very wretched condition.

When he had placed me in an elbow chair by the bedside, he desired me to look upon myself as at home, and to give my orders to

Bland—turning to the woman who attended to undress me—and to all the servants as if they were my own.—He then bowed, and left me.

No sooner was he gone than I said to this woman, who was, I soon found, his house-keeper—I am not capable of telling you any part of my unhappy story at present: I only intreat you, as you appear to be a worthy woman, to defend me from the ill designs of men, having been thrown into this unhappy situation by my own credulity: I listened too imprudently to a man whom I believed to be my friend: he deceived me grossly, but his dishonourable attempts were providentially defeated. I could say no more.

Mrs. *Bland* assured me in a tone, and manner which encouraged me to place a confidence in her, that she

she would take as much care of me as if I was her own child.

I thanked her, in few words— I soon felt myself feverish : I grew very restless : my head ached outrageously ; and a burning heat rendered me thirsty to a degree.

Mrs. *Bland*, after having offered me several kinds of refreshment, all of which I refused,—I only drank a little cold water—left me to endeavour to compose myself. But vain were all my endeavours : I was weary beyond expression ; my head became confused—I was exceedingly ill.

Mrs. *Bland*, finding me grow worse and worse sent for a physician—I remained in a state of insensibility for some time—they afterwards told me—and it was believed that I should not recover ; but my youth, and the strength of my constitution got the better, at last of my disorder—Not being yet
C 5 well

well enough, however, to write a great deal at a time ; I must now lay down my pen.

In Continuation.

AS soon as I began to grow a little better, Mr. *Brudenel*—that was the name of my protector—came to see me, and made use of a thousand different methods to amuse me, and to render my confinement less irksome. My fever has been upon me this fortnight, and I am now so unable to write a great deal at a sitting that I am forced to seize a quarter of an hour when I can hold up my head—Gladly do I seize a favourable moment because I imagine that you wish to hear about me and my proceedings ; I am sufficiently convinced, you may be assured, of the extreme impropriety of my remaining here, but whither can I fly ? who will receive me ? who will, indeed, suffer me to

to come into their house after having been out all night with *one* man, and several days under the same roof with *another*; an unmarried man, young and handsome too? what must people think of me, a girl whom her own parents will not look upon?—Since my residence in this house, I have been, it is true, prevented by illness from taking any steps towards clearing myself from the aspersions which have no doubt been levelled at me; as I left my father's house, very indiscreetly I confess, to go to *Scotland* with Mr. Bever, I deserve to suffer, in some measure for my indiscretion; and suffered severely. I have for it, abandoned as I am by my father and mother.—But yet I must confess to *you*, my friend, the real truth; I still endure more uneasiness from the deceitful behaviour of Bever; I am still more cruelly disquieted by finding that I

never possessed the heart which, according to my own flattering sensations, felt for *me* alone.—From henceforth never let a girl believe a man—for *no* man could appear in a more advantageous light than he did who has totally destroyed my peace.—Let no girl, at least, venture to disobey her parents, and to disoblige her family by leaving them to run away with a lover who only seeks the gratification of a dishonourable passion at the expence of *her* ruin,—*My* ruin was certainly the point, the only point, which Mr. Bever had in view; how grateful am I to heaven for having saved me from the anguish arising from a violated person, though I am doomed to feel the most injurious suspicions with regard to my character—To be conscious of one's innocence yet to lose one's character, what a mortifying, what a melancholy consideration!—A
speedy

speedy dissolution will, I hope, put an end to these agonizing reflections: nothing but death can relieve me from the misery which I endure from the poignancy of them.

I am pronounced to be, by the physician who attends me, at the request of Mr. Brudenel, in a dangerous decline. I would not willingly, however, die in *this* house—No man, it is true, can behave with greater delicacy than Mr. Brudenel does at present.—Did not Bever behave with as much delicacy at first?—He appeared in my eyes the image of sincerity, and his voice sounded in my ears like the voice of truth: his fine person, indeed, and his engaging address prejudiced me strongly in his favour, yet I certainly should not have thrown myself into his power, had I ever imagined he could have been guilty of so much treachery—But my sister who was as much pleased
with

with him as I was, and jealous of the preference he gave me—fatal preference — will never believe me, nor will she ever suffer my father and mother to think me innocent—Let me intreat you, however, my Patty, to go to them when you come to town and to endeavour to prevail on them to give credit to my earnest protestations with regard to the purity of my character, and to the sincerity of my repentance—Tell them that I severely reproach myself for having acted in opposition to their kind cautions; tell them that I am an unfeigned penitent; tell them at the same time, that though I am inexpressibly unhappy my honour is unfulled.

I wrote letters to my father and mother as soon as I was able to hold a pen, but have received no answer to them.—Exert yourself in my behalf, and say all you can to persuade them to shew some concern
for

for their unfortunate daughter—
try to soften their flinty hearts ; by
so doing you will add to the many
favours which you have already
conferred on

Your obliged
L. HAMILTON.

L E T T E R VI.

*James Brudenel Esq. to Sir George
Milbourne Bart.*

A little adventure in which I
was lately engaged prevented
me from answering your last, and it
has almost engrossed my thoughts
ever since.

About ten days ago, after having
dined and supped with Lady Whar-
ton—by the way I rarely sup with
her ladyship though she is so near
a relation—I was obliged to walk
home—My chariot came indeed at
seven, but my *wise* fellow, finding
that

that I did not want him then drove away and did not return at the hour I appointed—Being heartily weary of my company, therefore, when that hour arrived, I sat off on foot.

Passing through a short street in Piccadilly—I forget the name of it—I saw a beautiful young girl struggling with a man who wanted to force her to go with him. She cried loudly for help, and I interposed, I must have been insensible, to the greatest degree, not to have appeared in behalf of the most perfect creature nature ever made—By the light of a lamp near her, I could plainly perceive that she was of a fine height, that she had an easy shape, falling shoulders, an oval face, a clear complexion, dark languishing eyes, and hair of the same colour, with the most lovely mouth in the world.—These are the outlines of Lucy Hamilton's picture,

picture, but there is no doing justice to the charming symmetry of her whole figure, nor to the elegant expression in her animated features. I saw, enough, however, at that moment, to interest myself strongly in her favour : accordingly, I stepped up to the rude fellow who was dragging her after him ; and though I, at first, thought it possible that she might not be quite so innocent as she seemed to be— (there are girls, you know, who can put on all kinds of behaviour) yet her beauty and her distress demanded my attention : I, therefore, offered her my protection, and had the satisfaction to hear the softest sweetest voice imaginable, thank me for my interposition : — Her thanks were sufficiently encouraging, and I drove away my impertinent gentleman.—On seeing the lady ready to faint, I called a watchman who was going his rounds,

that I did not want him then drove away and did not return at the hour I appointed—Being heartily weary of my company, therefore, when that hour arrived, I sat off on foot.

Passing through a short street in Piccadilly—I forget the name of it—I saw a beautiful young girl struggling with a man who wanted to force her to go with him. She cried loudly for help, and I interposed, I must have been insensible, to the greatest degree, not to have appeared in behalf of the most perfect creature nature ever made—By the light of a lamp near her, I could plainly perceive that she was of a fine height, that she had an easy shape, falling shoulders, an oval face, a clear complexion, dark languishing eyes, and hair of the same colour, with the most lovely mouth in the world.—These are the outlines of Lucy Hamilton's picture,

picture, but there is no doing justice to the charming symmetry of her whole figure, nor to the elegant expression in her animated features. I saw, enough, however, at that moment, to interest myself strongly in her favour : accordingly, I stepped up to the rude fellow who was dragging her after him ; and though I, at first, thought it possible that she might not be quite so innocent as she seemed to be— (there are girls, you know, who can put on all kinds of behaviour) yet her beauty and her distress demanded my attention : I, therefore, offered her my protection, and had the satisfaction to hear the softest sweetest voice imaginable, thank me for my interposition : — Her thanks were sufficiently encouraging, and I drove away my impertinent gentleman.—On seeing the lady ready to faint, I called a watchman who was going his rounds,

rounds, and bade him get a coach as that which she had just quitted was not in a condition to carry her—When I asked her to what place I should wait on her, she sighed heartily, and wept, telling me that she had no home, no place to go to, declaring, at the same time, that though appearances were unfavourable to her she had been guilty of no criminal action; and indeed the openness of her countenance, added to the exquisite sensibility which she discovered, were so prepossessing that they strongly affected my heart, I entreated her to be comforted: I swore to defend her, to provide for her: I should have sworn also to love her, I believe, immediately, had I not been afraid of wounding her delicacy which was, evidently, equal to her affliction.—She became so weak, and so much disordered when I had seated her in the coach that I
was

was obliged, through meer humanity, to support her in my arms: I supported her, however, in the least offensive manner, and when I pressed her hands my pressure of them was rather affectionate than impassioned: I repeatedly assured her while I was so delightfully employed, that I would make it my whole study to relieve her.—She was incapable of making any reply to my repeated assurances—When I carried her to my own house—to what other house could I, with propriety, carry her?—she actually fainted away.—Bland, agreeably to my orders, assisted me in bringing her to her senses—She was then put to bed.—I commanded Bland to treat her, as I intended to treat her myself, with the greatest tenderness; especially as she had declared to *Bland*, how much she was terrified at the thoughts of being in the power of a stranger.—She was
 seized

seized with a violent fever, and Doctor Burton assured me that she was in danger : but she has struggled through it : she is, notwithstanding, in so weak a state, that the doctor apprehends her to be in a decline : her debility, and the agitation of her mind together alarm me exceedingly—Could I but restore her to the tranquility which she once (most probably) enjoyed, much might be hoped for—She has certainly been ill used, and she is of too tender a constitution to get the better of her first inclination : among the fair sex, the first inclination is, generally, the strongest—Bland tells me she is just risen : I must fly, therefore, to see if I can do any thing to amuse her.—When I am again at leisure I will proceed with my story.

LET-

L E T T E R VII.

From the same to the same.

I left off to go to Lucy : I found her exceedingly low, and have been all this day trying to divert her thoughts from dwelling too intensely upon her misfortunes— Nothing will I leave undone to restore peace to her disturbed bosom: but what would I not give to inspire her with a passion lively as that which has been the cause of her present distress —I have not yet ventured to throw out the least hint with regard to the subject which engrosses my thoughts, but she must certainly read *these* thoughts in my every look, in all my actions.—To own the truth, George, when I first saw her, her situation was as unfavourable to her as her beauty was uncommon ; and by her readiness

ness to put herself under my protection I was induced to look upon her as one of those girls who are not sorry to fall in with a young fellow of fortune not unwilling to make a genteel provision for her—I was therefore perhaps, the more disposed to take care of her, but I soon found I was mistaken: I soon found that she was really virtuous—I was not, indeed, so much in love with her, at first sight, as to give credit entirely to the information of my eyes, well knowing that there are women who can put on all kinds of characters to facilitate the execution of their designs: nor did I, afterwards, believe all the tales my good house-keeper told me about her *apprehensions* &c. in *my* house; though, I confess, whenever I beheld her she appeared to me as pure as an angel.—When her fever left her, and she was able to sit up, I frequently
went

went into her room, and endeavoured to entertain her, as I found her almost always oppressed with a deep melancholy. With my efforts to amuse her I occasionally, unavoidably indeed, intermixed some little tenderness: they were never encouraged; they were received with an unusual reserve, whenever I began to press her hand in mine, it was instantly withdrawn—a hand, so deliciously soft that I could have devoured it—When I sometimes caught her in my arms, in order to support her, she started back, and appeared displeased; yet, as my passion was hourly increasing I could scarcely forbear, now and then, indulging it by those innocent liberties.

Having assisted her, the other day, to walk to the window of her apartment which looks into Hyde Park, I threw my arm round her snowy neck while she stood to view
the

the distant carriages rolling along, which seemed to steal her away from her sorrows, and leaned my face towards her's.—She started, and looked, for a moment, as if she resented my behaviour; then, bursting into tears she as hastily as her feeble feet would permit her, returned to her chair, without deigning to make use of my offered arm.—Soon afterwards, wiping her lovely eyes, she said, Sit down, Mr. Brudenel; I ought not to be offended at your behaviour, as you behave in consequence of mistaken opinions concerning me; but if you will have consideration enough for me to listen to me patiently, I shall be able, I hope, to remove all your injurious sentiments with regard to me, though I am very ready to own that I have been unpardonably indiscreet.

She then began her story in the following manner.

My

“ My father, sir, whose name is Hamilton, has only a *place* for his subsistence, and for the support of his family, a son and two daughters. I am the youngest by five years, and was beloved both by my father and mother till chance threw me into the way of a Mr. Bever. My sister and I were well educated, and we were continually told that virtue and discretion would be our only fortunes; we were informed also that were we possessed of millions we could not, without those virtues, either *be* happy, or *deserve* to be happy.—Sentiments of this sort were early and strongly impressed on our minds; my father and mother were also very cautious about our company and diversions; permitting us to see but few people, and to go to few publick places.—For my own part I was never fond either of company or diversions; one evening, however, we were

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taken to *Ranalagh* : as it was a fire-work night, and as we had never seen the illuminations, we endeavoured to get as near as we could to them without running any hazard of being hurt by them.—We found ourselves very politely assisted by a most agreeable man, personally so, and equally agreeable in his address—In short, sir, both my sister and myself thought that we had never seen so engaging a figure before. Unfortunately for me, I only was particularly distinguished by him. He insisted upon taking care of me out ; he made himself acquainted with the part of the town in which I lived, wrote to me, and followed me every where to the great uneasiness of my father and mother, and to the considerable mortification of my sister.—My father, at last, peremptorily forbade me to speak to him, telling me that a man who had not first applied

applied to *him* with regard to *me* could have no honourable designs.— I paid no attention to that prohibition—how severely have I since smarted for my disobedience!—but strongly infatuated by an affection for him, which I could not, in all my conflicts between duty and inclination, suppress, and too young to trouble my head about consequences, I, at length, consented to elope with him to Scotland, as he assured me that he could not marry me publicly for fear of disobliging a rich old uncle. In a fatal hour I believed him; in a fatal hour I complied with his importunate request—On the first night of our journey he attempted to take advantage of my love, and of my indiscretion; but heaven gave me strength to resist him: I escaped; I returned to my father's house—admittance was refused—my sister told me, from a window, that I

must never expect to be received again.—Going back from thence I was a second time insulted, by a stranger; you, sir, generously hastened to my relief —You have humanely, taken care of me in an illness which has almost brought me to the grave, and you are entitled to my sincerest, my most grateful acknowledgments.—I wish I could make any return for the favours you have conferred upon me, but I will die rather than repay the civilities I have received from you in the manner you seem to expect.—I will, therefore, leave your house—I shall never forget what you have done for me, and if ever fortune puts it into my power to make acknowledgments more adequate to the obligations I am under to you, I shall endeavour to shew my gratitude to you, in a better way than I possibly can at present, for having
been

been so extremely kind to me when I was inexpressibly distressed.

Here the sweet, injured girl ceased to speak—I loved her before I heard her story, I doated on her after she had related it —The noble frankness of her disposition, the irresistible charms of her person, and the enchanting delicacy of her manners have fixed me for ever hers—But what can I do? though I am thoroughly assured that she is purity itself——(has she not sufficiently proved her virtue by repelling the attacks of the man she so dearly loves?) yet this slur upon her character is a shocking one—I hardly know how to act in this extraordinary affair—However I need not put myself into such a hurry; she will never, I am afraid, love any man, except the fellow who has deceived her — To double my disquiet, she looks as if she was going to fall a victim to her unfortunate

passion for him.—When I think of losing her I am distracted.

L E T T E R VIII.

Miss Sommers to Miss Hamilton.

I have been twice to your father's, my Lucy; but why must I add to no purpose; your unrelenting parents will not hear of your returning to them; they persist in believing that you cannot have escaped the worst of evils; they persist in believing that you have been ruined by the man in whom you thought you had all the reason in the world to place an unlimited confidence—They also very much disapprove of your continuing with Mr. Brudenel, who is known, they say, to be a man of pleasure; your continuance with him makes them look upon you as abandoned, and it is not in my power to alter their opinions :

opinions; it is, however, in my power to assist you in making some provision for yourself as soon as you are well enough to come abroad—I will do all I can to procure you a decent asylum — 'tis in vain to assert your innocence before people who will not give credit to my assertions—Your sister contributes, I am afraid, to the degradation of your character by the invectives which jealousy forces her to throw out against you, and your father and mother affirm that if they take you home, after having run away from them, your return will be highly prejudicial to your sister, as every body will think it an encouragement to her to follow your footsteps.—This is all I can get out of them, and my own father and mother are but too much in the same way of thinking. — What assistance, therefore, I give you, must be given privately, or I shall

certainly be prevented—I cannot think the rigid sentiments by which our parents are actuated to be commended; I am the less inclined to approve of them when I reflect upon your severe sufferings in consequence of them.—But yet, my amiable friend, let me persuade you to subscribe to them, as the reputation of a young woman is so very tender that the slightest breath of calumny is fatal to it.—Besides, I cannot thoroughly commend your Mr. Brudenel's behaviour—Remember Bever: who could be more tender, and more insinuating, meerly to destroy? be upon your guard, therefore, and be ready to leave Mr. Brudenel as soon as a proper place can be found for you—Do not be cast down, my sweet friend: things may turn out better than you expect: take care of your health: be particularly attentive to your health; I can
trust

trust you with regard to your honour as you are now at a distance from Bever—after the trial which you have gone through, surely you may be trusted any where: yet you are, undoubtedly, safer out of the reach of man.—Your reputation also may, by a regular life, under the inspection of a discreet, friendly person of your own sex, be restored, if such a person can be found.—Once more let me intreat you, my dearest Lucy, to receive consolation; and to believe me

Yours, ever sincerely,

ever affectionately;

M. SOMMERS.

L E T T E R IX.

Mr. Broadwell to Sir George Milbourne.

THIS amiable creature gains upon me every hour. I love her, George; love her sincerely: I cannot possibly think such a face deceitful: your precaution, therefore, though well intended, is unreasonable. Many men, you say, as knowing as myself, have been taken in by artful women, who make it their study to affect a simplicity in their behaviour in order to dupe, with the greater certainty, the man on whom they happen to fix: but this is quite an artless creature, there is an unfeigned frankness, and a noble sincerity in her countenance which shew her to be unacquainted with hypocrisy.—
 She received a letter, yesterday,
 from

cannot accept of your generous offer, I will remain under your protection till I can settle myself more to my satisfaction ; because I think, added she, with a look which shewed she placed a confidence in me, that I may trust myself with the man, who would marry a woman without a fortune, without friends, and even without a character.

I thanked her for this delicious condescension, George, though I lamented my inability to touch her heart. I live in hopes, however, of gaining *that* grand point by and by.—She has loved this rogue Bever violently ; and were she capable of conquering her passion for him easily, I should not have an high idea of her constancy—the woman who is given to change, can never be long constant to any man.

L E T-

L E T T E R X.

From the same to the same.

AND so you think me absolutely mad to offer to marry a girl on so slight an acquaintance?—But is she not exquisitely handsome; has she not an excellent understanding? has she not an enchanting *Naivete*, and a modesty at once alluring and forbidding? Where now, in your *severe* opinion, can I find a more perfect creature?—Of her perfections you may be assured, from my description of her, but were you to gaze on her beauteous form, were you to listen to her melodious accents you would feel what I feel—your soul would be almost dissolved in love.

Why ay; there is many a woman agreeable enough to please a man,
as

as a mistress, who would not do for a wife.

A mistress! can I think of making dishonourable proposals to a woman who has had virtue enough to resist the man she doats on in spite of his infamous behaviour?—What a violence shall I offer to humanity, as well as honour, by deceiving an innocent girl, who has given me the strongest proofs of her tenderness?—Had Bever told her at once that he never *should* marry her, she would, undoubtedly, have been able to get the better of her inclination for him, before it grew to such an overpowering height——She, therefore, very justly calls him for his treachery, base and unmanly.—With an unfeeling flirt any liberties may be taken, but a woman of a really tender disposition ought to be treated in a very different manner — I never met with a woman superior to Lucy with regard to virtuous sentiments :

sentiments : her heart is as pure as
 her person is lovely : with such a
 woman I stand the fairest chance
 to be happy : and yet this woman
 has refused to marry me——She
 acts right by refusing me : still re-
 gretting her first lover, she cannot so
 soon divest herself of the pleasing
 hopes she had entertained of being
 happy with him.—She has also to
 lament his not being the man of
 honour she imagined him to be.—
 How cruelly must such a delicate
 heart as hers be affected by so un-
 expected a behaviour !—She must
 have time to recover from this
 disappointment ; and I will make it
 my business to gain her esteem, by
 giving her every day more and
 more reason to believe that she may
 very safely continue to remain here
 under *my* protection.—She has
 been so much affected by hearing,
 from a female friend, that her
 parents will, on no account, re-
 ceive

ceive her, that her fever is returned:—The Doctor assures me, indeed, that it is a very slight one, yet I tremble with apprehensions——Guess then to what a degree I love her—love her! I doat on her.——

L E T T E R X I.

Miss Hamilton to Miss Sommers.

YOUR letter went to my heart, my dear Patty; yet the kindness you have shewn for me by pleading to my father and mother in my behalf, cannot be sufficiently acknowledged: but tell me, my friend, is it not hard, very hard, to be so soon cast off; to be abandoned for my *first* offence?—I readily grant that I have been guilty of a great indiscretion but to be denied the protection of my parents, after having so severely suffered, and
sincerely

sincerely repented——How cruelly am I treated! supposing my father and mother to have ever been fonder of my sister than of me, yet I am also their child—I have the same natural right to expect the exertion of their tenderness in my favour, as she has to expect it in hers—Nor let my sister be so virulent against me for the preference given me by Mr. Bever, which has been attended with consequences so fatal to me; let her rather be thankful that she has escaped the affliction which I *have* endured, which I *still* endure.—My feelings at this time are sufficiently painful; and no girl smarting under the same would wish to be distinguished by the men—Yet it is still *my* lot, Patty to be *distinguished*—This Mr. Brudenel, from whom you so earnestly urge me to fly, has made me an offer which I know not how to put on a footing with
Mr.

Mr. Bever's, because he has declared that he will go to my father, and desire him to be present at the ceremony which is to secure me an honourable, and enviable alliance.—But I cannot accept of it. I cannot think of marrying a man who is not in possession of my heart.—By so doing I should make a base return indeed for the favours I have received, which I continually receive—I am unable to describe his perpetual endeavours to amuse and to entertain me.—He appears so distressed when he does not succeed that I cannot help pitying him; yet I can only feel *pity* for him: and pity will not sufficiently recompense him for all which he does, for all which he is willing to do for me.—While I was thinking of leaving him, meerly through discretion, I was attacked with a return of my fever, and could scarce lift up my head from
the

the pillow. The Doctor, however, says, that I must not lie in bed as I shall be too much weakened by so doing—I, therefore, sit up till I am ready to drop.—Mr. Brudenel contrives a thousand methods to render my disorder supportable: yet I will go from him as soon as I am able; but, sick as I am, who will let me in?—I must have patience. In the mean time do you kindly continue to enquire after a proper place for me—and remember that I shall be most willing, when my health and strength return to do any thing in an honest way to procure a subsistence; my honest endeavours may in time, perhaps, reconcile me to my dear father and mother, and enable me to make proper acknowledgments to my excellent Patty, for her very affectionate behaviour to me.

L E T-

L E T T E R X I I .

Mr. Brudenel to Sir George Milbourne.

NEVER tell me, George, that Miss Hamilton is a sly, artful creature, impossible!—Virtue and innocence strikingly appear in all her looks; all her words and actions confirm the favourable appearance in her looks, and there is a simplicity in her whole carriage which is, in *my* opinion, strongly conclusive in her favour, though you would persuade me that she has invented a story on purpose to draw me in:—You also think that she appears to be uneasy about staying with me, and eager to depart that I may insist upon detaining her: but I know her behaviour is in consequence of very different motives.—I have seen a letter which
she

she received very lately from a friend; perhaps you will endeavour to make me believe that she wrote it herself—I am sure she did not—From the manner in which it is written, and from the manner in which it came to my perusal, I am doubly convinced that it was never intended for my inspection.—In the first place, her friend plainly tells her that she does not approve of my behaviour; presses her to leave me, and assures her that she will endeavour to find a proper place for her.—That shall be *my* business, however. — This letter was also carefully concealed from my sight, but your suspicions, though I did not absolutely give credit to them, naturally made me fearful of an imposition: I was, therefore, driven to take a step which I can neither approve of nor defend:—And yet as my happiness and honour were both at stake, I actually became capable

capable of an action of which, I once thought, I never could have been guilty—In short, Milbourne, I obliged Bland to procure me a sight of the letter—What a scandalous meanness! to what despicable littlenesses are we not prompted by suspicion? The truth is, when *you* had filled my mind with horrid apprehensions, I could not rest till I had satisfied myself that they were ill grounded: I was even carried so far by them that I began to fancy I should not be guilty of a criminal procedure by gratifying my curiosity.—My future peace depended entirely upon Lucy's sincerity—was not my proceeding then rather laudable than reprehensible?—But there is still an extremely difficult point to gain—How shall I wean her affections from this rascal, and fix them on myself? Let him be ever so undeserving of such a heart as Lucy's,

he appeared, no doubt, to be possessed of every virtue when he made a conquest of it: and it is, certainly, no easy matter to efface the impression made by an insinuating fellow upon a bosom the softest, the tenderest to be conceived.—How many men are there, and men too not of the mildest manners, not of the gentlest affections, who are never able to get over the inconstancy of a favourite mistress or a wife of whom they have been excessively fond!—Can I then expect a dear amiable girl strongly prepossessed in favour of the man who behaved like a villain to her, after he had made himself master of her heart——Can I expect, I say, such a girl, so circumstanced, readily to change the object of her love?—No—By the most flattering attentions, by the most constant assiduities, and by the strongest solicitude to make myself

myself serviceable, by them only can I hope to make her feel sensations similar to my own : and I *do* hope that I shall, in time, kindle such emotions in her tender breast.—

To what purpose do you talk to me about Maria—She is a fine, lively girl indeed ; and I have long seen that my aunt would like to have a match between us : but I never had any engagements there I assure you, nor did I ever give Maria the slightest reason to believe that I thought her more agreeable than any other woman.

L E T T E R XIII.

William Bever Esq. to Lord Musgrave.

I Found your three letters lying upon my table last night when I came in, or I should not have now taken up my pen to write to

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you

you: Will you believe it? Lucy Hamilton, that dear, delicious little devil, after whom I have so long dangled, has, at last, out-plotted me, just at the critical moment too when I fully expected to triumph over her in the compleatest manner imaginable—Just when I had her in my arms, she escaped me; I have been ever since, in search of her, but I cannot find her out. This search after her prevented me from calling at my house in town, and my people, expecting me every hour to return, and not knowing exactly where I was, sent no letters to me——This explanation will account for my not having taken any notice of your dispatches to me.

You are no stranger to my rooted aversion to marriage; you will not, therefore, be surprized at my endeavouring to get Lucy upon my own terms: yet, as she had been very
strictly

strictly educated, and was naturally chaste, upon my soul I thought so—I knew that it would be to no purpose to offer a settlement; and I was not quite so abandoned as to make use of any of those hellish arts which subdue the senses by intoxication—Besides, I would not give a straw for the meer person of the finest woman in the kingdom without the possession of her heart: and that I had Lucy's heart I was pretty well assured; I, therefore, laid a scheme which must have infallibly succeeded, I imagined—I invented a plausible tale of my uncle's being alarmed about my marrying without *his* approbation, and by the help of that tale prevailed on her to elope with me to Scotland; not designing, however, to go farther than a day's journey—Accordingly, I sent my man to get every thing ready for the execution of my scheme; supposing that after

an elegant, and piquant supper, accompanied with proper wines, and a profusion of caresses, my charmer might be easily induced to believe that we might without being in the least criminally employed, proceed to the last intimacies, as those intimacies would be religiously licensed in so short a time: but I found myself confoundedly out in my reckoning, for not all my vows, sighs, and tears could prove successful—Her virtue, Frank, was, actually, impregnable: and she was so exceedingly affected by the attack which I made upon her, that I became very much alarmed: I was strongly apprehensive of a fainting fit: some fellows, meer sensualists, would have considered such a fit, as a fortunate event, but it would not have gratified *me*: besides, I felt, at that instant, I really loved her: loved her better than I thought I did;

I did; and therefore, could not bear to render her miserable by persisting to behave in a manner which would be deemed brutal.— I was also alarmed lest I should be discovered by the people of the house in making a vile attempt upon her. — In consequence of those very disagreeable agitations, I left her at her earnest request; and retired to my own apartment, in order to strike upon a new scheme, hoping that she would be a little come to herself in the morning:—And I flattered myself, that as there was no possibility of her returning home, she would, at last, be disposed to fall in with my original design, and consent to live with me upon very easy terms.— Guess, then, my surprize and vexation when I found that she had quitted the house, and that nobody knew any thing concerning her. All my pursuits after her have

hitherto been ineffectual : that she is not at her father's I am certain ; I was well assured, indeed, before I prevailed on her to elope that she would never be received at home again, as Mr. Hamilton is uncommonly rigid in his behaviour to his children, and as her sister is of a very envious, and jealous disposition.—How mortified, therefore, must she be to be thrown quite out of their protection ; how doubly mortified must I be to lose her at the very moment when I was going to reap the fruit of my dexterity and address : what a cursed disappointment ! it is not to be borne——There is still an addition to my mortification ; as she is deprived of all hopes of returning to her family, she must, necessarily, fall into the power of some man who will take advantage of all I have been doing, and find her pliant enough to make him happy without

without any demurrage: that, that alone is sufficient to distract me—To think of another's possessing her charms!—Racks and tortures! But I will never suffer such an event—I will either tear her from him, or contrive some methods to separate them—I will separate them, or lose my life.

L E T T E R. XIV.

Miss Sommers to Miss Hamilton.

IF this man, this Brudenel is in earnest, Lucy; if it is possible for a man to be honest in a commerce with our sex, seize, by all means, seize the lucky moment to regain your reputation; marry him, and let *one* man repair the injuries which you have received from another—Talk not of delicacy: a girl who has had spirit enough to fly from her father's

E 5 house

house with a man to whom she was not married cannot—(I was going to say—but forgive me, my dear; I forget that love, ruinous to half our sex gave you the courage which produced such unhappy consequences——)—ought not to hesitate nicely about a step which will, at once, procure an honourable and advantageous situation in life.—Take great care, however, my dear, that you are not a second time deceived:—Accept, immediately, of Mr. Brudenel's offer to go to your father, and let your father, who will then be, no doubt, instantly, reconciled, give you to him at the altar. Reflect only, for a moment, on the brilliancy of such a proposal; consider what joy it will give your father and mother to see a child, whom they had given over as lost, happily restored to them in a manner they could not have ventured to hope for:

for: consider how deservedly your sister will be chagrined for her malevolence and cruelty with regard to you, and lastly consider how gloriously Bever will be disappointed: how justly rewarded for his villainous behaviour.—Need I say more my friend, to induce you to follow, without delay, the advice of your

very sincere

M. SOMMERS.

LETTER XV.

Miss Hamilton to Miss Sommers.

CAN my friend, my Patty, talk in this manner to her Lucy? Can you, possibly, be so little acquainted with my heart, or indeed, with those sentiments which ought to be—which I believed ever were—similar to your own—you correct me justly for my imprudent

prudent carriage : your censures are in the highest degree proper, and I thank you for them, I wish I could also thank you for looking upon things in their true light ; but in that light you certainly do not look upon them at present——How can I approve of the justness of your sentiments when you tell me that I ought to take advantage of the generosity of *one* to make myself amends for the baseness of another ; when you urge me to marry *that* man meerly to procure an honourable settlement, and to give him my hand, in return for his noble behaviour, without a character, without a heart !—In this *interested* manner you would have me reward Mr. Brudenel for his esteem for me ; not considering that if I consent to be his wife without feeling any love for him I shall render myself still lower than ever in my own eyes : by
such

such a marriage I shall be surely guilty of prostitution in the worst sense of the word, because actuated by mercenary motives. — Some women, perhaps, may receive pleasure from their connections with *one* man while their affections are fixed upon *another*, but I am not one of those. As to Mr. Bever I wish not to let him see that I have it in my power to be married to a man with as large, if not a larger, fortune—No; if he is not conscious of the injury he has already done me, nothing that I can do will bring him to a right sense of his conduct: if he *is*, may he be punished by reflecting on his dishonourable behaviour to an innocent girl who loved him, and who, consequently, reposed a confidence in him: I wish him no other punishment: nor will I ever seek to inflict any other upon him: but I cannot bring myself, to im-
pose

pose on Mr. Brudenel—by suffering him to go to my father to ask for *his* consent, as he will not have *mine*. I wish, earnestly, that my father would receive me again, and pardon the fault I have committed, yet if his forgiveness cannot be obtained unless I subscribe to methods contrary to my judgment as well as to my inclination, I will continue to hope that I may by your means, my friend, if you are not too much displeased with me for differing from you, find an asylum where I may have liberty, at least, to act agreeably to the dictates of my own conscience—With regard to my sister, I desire not to raise her envy, and to excite her jealousy a second time, though I cannot help thinking that she has treated me with very great unkindness.

Adieu.

L E T-

L E T T E R XVI.

Mr. Brudenel to Sir George Milbourne.

I Find, every hour, more reason both to admire, and to esteem Miss Hamilton: she is of a most amiable disposition, so much gentleness, united with so strong yet so refined an understanding is rarely to be met with.—She still persists in her resolution to leave me: but as she has no place to go to, nor any hopes of being reconciled to her father and mother — particularly the former—she is very unhappy—the lowness of her spirits, occasioned by her melancholy reflections has injured her health so much that I have been exceedingly alarmed.—I determined to make a visit, myself, to Mr. Hamilton, and to inform him how unjustly
his

his daughter has been afflicted by his severity : a severity which could not be of any service to his other children, but which might be in the highest degree, detrimental to *her*.—I went, without communicating my design to Lucy.

I was received by the old gentleman with a pride and stiffness which a good deal disgusted me, though his person was agreeable—It could not, indeed, be otherwise, as there was a strong resemblance to his daughter's observable in it.—To *that* resemblance alone he was indebted for the civility I paid him—However, I could make nothing of him—I solemnly assured him that I was ready to marry his daughter the moment I had obtained her consent, and that his taking her home would, probably, save her life, yet I could not prevail on him to make any abatement of his anger against this poor, dear

dear girl—I could only bring him to say that if I married his daughter — (by the way he strongly questioned my sincerity with his eyes)—he would then see her.

When I came home I found Lucy so weak, and so low, that I was some time in doubt whether I should relate what had passed between her father and me: but hoping that my narration might, possibly, induce her to accept of me I entered upon it; only taking care to soften all the asperities with which her father's refusal was attended.

My narrative was too much for her: she was ready to faint—I hastened to support her: she leaned on me, and, lifting up her charming eyes, in which grief was most forcibly expressed, she said, with a sigh, “Oh! Mr. Brudenel; how much am I obliged to you, though you have not been successful! I have,

have, indeed, but *one* friend in the world except yourself."

Think not of *that* friend, replied I, straining her to my breast, you have no need of any friend but me—I will be every thing you can desire, for I am sure that you cannot long suffer your mind to dwell upon a man who has so grossly deceived you.

No, answered she, while a deep blush crimsoned her lovely face, which she attempted to cover with her hand, "no, sir; but I cannot yet be every thing you would have me—I cannot so soon forget——Would my father but condescend to take me home, time, and *your* merit, Mr. Brudenel, will, doubtless efface all former indiscreet impressions:—His severity—though I have deserved it—almost breaks my heart."

I pitied her extremely, Milbourne: *you* would have pitied her;

her ; every man of sensibility would
 have felt compassion for her——
 My looks discovered my feelings——
 I could not take my eyes from her
 enchanting face, rendered still more
 alluring by her sorrow——yet was
 I fearful of giving her offence, as
 she, more than once, averted *her*
 beauteous eyes to avoid the ardent
 gaze of *mine*——I was considerably
 pained at the thoughts of having
 occasioned a moment's uneasiness
 to her. I sunk down at her feet——
 I fervently intreated her to pardon
 me if I had——involuntarily——dis-
 pleased her.—She raised me, with
 a smile of benignity which darted
 comfort to my drooping soul.—She
 stretched out her hand: I pressed
 it to my bosom, and to my lips
 with a tenderness which seemed to
 move her, for she smiled with still
 more complacency. — Dear, dear
 girl! If I should, at last, touch
 her

My tears almost blind me—I must conclude, another time.

In Continuation.

MR. Brudenel surprized me, weeping. He has thought of a scheme to reconcile me, in some measure, to myself, and to make my family look upon me with more consideration—His design is to introduce me to lady Wharton his aunt who is, he assures me, of a very affable disposition; and who will, he adds, treat me with respect on *his* account—Yet, had I all the merit ascribed to me by Mr. Brudenel—(Men will flatter, Patty) what woman of *her* rank in life will receive a poor lost girl who has eloped from her parents, who is totally neglected by them, and whose health, peace and character are destroyed?—I insisted upon the extreme improbability of her ladyship's

ship's looking upon me in the expected light, but my generous lover continued to assure me that he knew his aunt too well to be mistaken—He then left me to go and talk with her upon the intended subject.

Soon after he was gone a number of disagreeable thoughts crowded into my mind: but I was particularly disquieted by the apprehensions which I felt with regard to Mr. Brudenel's sincerity: I tremble with fear lest I should be again deceived. — Well may *she* tremble who has been once deluded, and be apprehensive of a second imposition. I must, therefore, intreat you, my dear friend, to make some enquiry concerning this lady, that I may be acquainted with her character, and have also some idea of her person, lest there should be deceit in that heart which is, apparently, filled with all the virtues

virtues by which human nature can be adorned.—Forgive me, Mr. Brudenel—I *must* doubt—Bever has given me a very indifferent opinion of mankind—Be speedy, therefore my dear friend, in your enquiries, as you value the safety of your affectionate

L. HAMILTON.

P. S. Mr. Brudenel tells me that Lady Wharton has a house at Windsor.

L E T T E R XVIII.

Mr. Brudenel to Sir George Milbourne.

THIS dear girl has been so distressed by her father's indifference that I am absolutely wretched about her—Her melancholy increases: her disorder gathers strength—I have endeavoured to think of a scheme the execution of which

which may retrieve her character, raise me in her opinion, and, perhaps warm her heart with a softer passion than pity—By bringing lady Wharton to countenance her I shall restore her character to its original lustre, and countenanced she *must* be by her ladyship as soon as I can prevail on her to give me her hand: if my good aunt should prove refractory indeed, I shall never think of visiting her again.—It will be better for lady Wharton to make no opposition to my design; and it will be both for *her* honour and mine, as well as for Miss Hamilton's reputation to let the world perceive, that *she* is esteemed by my family rather before our marriage than afterwards.

In Continuation.

I Have been to pay a visit to lady Wharton, I told her Lucy's story, and acquainted her with my firm resolution to marry her.

You may imagine that her ladyship discovered some surprize, and dislike: she discovered both the one and the other but finding me determined, she at length, consented to receive Miss Hamilton into her family—governed, I believe, entirely, by the above-mentioned reasons—and to treat her as a person who was to be soon related to her.

When I had gained my point I flew home to the charming girl, fully imagining that I should make her quite as easy, as she could be, with regard to every thing but Bever's behaviour, which it was not in my power to change; and you may believe I did not wish to
change

change it.—Conceive, then, my surprize and concern when she, turning pale, looked disappointed, and was silent. I felt myself, I confess, so very much disappointed that I did not immediately recover from the unexpected stroke. As soon as I was able to speak, I said, Do you then hesitate, my dear Miss Hamilton, about going to Lady Wharton's at Windsor: I flatter myself that change of air may be of service to you—Your spirits also will grow better from the variety of company you may meet with there, who will all treat you with the respect due to your merit.

She curt'fied, and replied—I thank you, sir, but I fear my ill health will not permit me to think of giving any trouble to *your* family—I shall soon, I hope, hear of a proper situation for me—

With these words she immediately left me.—Now what conclusion am I to draw from all this? I am, I own, exceedingly perplexed. — She cannot have any thing to apprehend from my relations who will certainly, whether they like her or not, behave to her *politely*, at least, on *my* account— But I hear her coming.

Adieu.

LETTER XIX.

Miss Sommers to Miss Hamilton.

I Have made every enquiry you can desire, my dear Lucy, and have been, unexpectedly, fortunate—The person to whom I went, in search of the wished for intelligence, is a sort of companion to Lady Wharton's mother; she has always been esteemed by her ladyship, and is still so much in her favour
as

as to be consulted frequently by her upon any particular occasion.

As soon as I had mentioned her ladyship, and hinted something about Mr. Brudenel, Mrs. Pledger most luckily said, that lady Wharton was under a good deal of concern about her nephew who was, she believed, attached to a low-born girl, in every respect unworthy of him: adding that he had desired her to entertain the girl a few weeks at Windsor, as he wished to remove her into the country, and did not know with whom to place her, and that she had, at last, complied with his request, though she thought it a very extraordinary one, in order to judge of the merit of the young person in whose praise Mr. Brudenel had been so loud, and on whom he had been so lavish of his encomiums.

F 3

I seemed

I seemed not to attend to this preamble, but instantly asked her what kind of a figure lady Whar-ton was?

Of a middle size, replied she; her complexion is clear: she has dark hair, and a great deal of dignity in her carriage: she has much affability in her countenance, and ease in her manner. — She *would* be very handsome had she not a red mark on her right cheek which is, they say, a bunch of raspberries; and that mark sometimes, especially when she is warm, has rather a disagreeable appearance.”

This information was sufficient—There can be no imposition here; for Mrs. Pledger knew not my reason for enquiring about her ladyship; and she, consequently, could have no design in her answers.—You may, therefore, I think, safely venture, my dear Lucy—the sooner
the

the better—to put yourself under the protection of a woman of *her* birth and fashion.—The protection of such a woman will restore your character, and I dare believe that your innocent face, and unaffected behaviour, will thoroughly convince her that every report to your disadvantage is false.—And then, my dear, you will have nothing to do but to accept of Mr. Brudenel's offered hand directly, in order to produce a reconciliation with your own family : that so desirable a reconciliation may be speedily effected, is the sincere wish of,

Your ever affectionate,

M. SOMMERS.

LETTER XX.

Mr. Brudenel to Sir George Milbourne.

I Have succeeded. Miss Hamilton goes with me to Windsor in a few days : she is perfectly charming : the hesitation about which I was so much puzzled resulted entirely from prudence. As she had been so grossly imposed upon, her fears were indeed commendable. Yet, will you believe it, she fancied that I was going to carry her to a fictitious Lady Whar-ton.—Heavens ! how extremely she wronged me !—I doat, however, on her discretion : it makes her a thousand times more amiable, and consequently increases her value. I cannot stay now to write a long letter. I am preparing every thing to render her little journey as agreeable

greeable as possible. — Besides, I cannot leave her a moment.

Adieu.

L E T T E R XXI.

From the same to the same.

Windsor.

I Brought down my charming girl to this place in my post-chaise and four. I had taken care previously to see that she was furnished with every thing necessary to make her accommodations complete. I gave her a pocket-book as soon as she had consented to accompany me, with a hundred pound bank note inclosed, desiring her earnestly to order cloaths, &c. &c. fit for her appearance at Windsor. — She blushed, and hesitated again. — My dear Miss Hamilton, said I, do not let me embarrass you, but you surely must be sensible that a change of dress will be absolutely

requisite, and I am afraid your wardrobe has been hitherto very ill supplied. Had I not been apprehensive of alarming your delicacy, I should have, long ago, requested your acceptance of this trifle.—

(Bland, indeed, had furnished her with linen, &c. &c. as she had been sick almost all the time during her residence with me.)

It is no trifle, Mr. Brudenel, replied she, it will lay me under great obligations.

You must not, shall not think so, said I, for you are, at this moment, conferring a considerable favour upon me, by accepting this small proof of my friendship.

She bowed, and, after a short pause, told me that it was too large a sum, and that a few guineas would be sufficient, as she did not doubt but that her father, however incensed against her, would give her up her cloaths.

You

You shall not ask him, my dear Miss Hamilton, said I : only condescend to order what is necessary for your appearance at Windsor :—My aunt, if you approve of such a mode, shall defray your expences : let me, however, intreat you to keep that bill : you may want it ; and if you never should have any occasion for it, you can but return it to me at last.

She sighed : a few tears stole down her charming face. —Recovering herself a little, she replied, After what you have done for me, Sir, I should have no will but yours : yet I shall be made more easy by your taking back the bill, and by lending me only ten guineas.

That is far too small a sum, answered I ; let Bland then come in to receive your orders : I will set down the several articles, and you shall be at liberty to do what

you please with the remainder of the money.

She took, herself, my pencil, and wrote upon a sheet of paper the linen, &c. &c. which she should want; and as I insisted upon her having every thing the best of the kind, there were not, when an elegant change of every part of dress was fixed upon, above five and twenty guineas left: I begged her to take them for her pocket-money, as she would, undoubtedly, find them very serviceable to her at my aunt's.

We had a long dispute about the fineness of the lace and linen, and the richness of the silks: she declared, over and over again, that the plainest of every sort was most proper for her: but I carried my point at last, and only consulted her fancy about colour and form, in which she discovered a charming taste.

While

While we waited in town for the making up her cloaths, she dropped not a single acknowledgment, not one grateful expression : she scarcely thanked me for what I had done, but immediately, from that moment, changed her behaviour. She became attentive to me alone, studious to please me, and received every little return on *my* part in a manner which gave me the greatest reason to hope I should, one day, gain her.—But, though I die to be in the possession of her lovely person, what is her hand without her heart, of which I am not yet, I see plainly, master : her sighs and tears frequently assure me that her heart still beats for Bever.—Time, however, may weaken her first attachment, and ripen the esteem which she, I believe, now feels for me, into love.—I will, at least, give way to the flatteries of hope.

hope.—But, to proceed with my narrative—

When her cloaths were brought home, instead of being elated at the sight of them, she rather seemed to be unusually depressed; and it was with much difficulty that Bland could prevail on her to try them on.

For a long time she complained of a violent head-ach, and lowness of spirits, which increased as the day for our journey to Windsor approached.—I shall never forget, while I exist, the elegant figure she made when we came down to breakfast, on the morning we sat out.—Her gown was a light brown lustring, shot with white, and it was trimmed with a rich blond-lace: this, with a stomacher and sleeve-knots of pale pink, suited her delicate complexion beyond expression; a small laced handkerchief shaded her snowy neck.—

Her

Her fine hair, which has not yet been under the hands of a hair-dresser, was combed lightly over a roll, on which she wore a very becoming blond-hood ; upon *that* there was a black hat lined with white, and laced with a deep lace, half of which hung over her eyes, and added new beauties to her lovely face : such was her dress, and so alluring a languor was spread over her elegant features, accompanied with an appearance of the most bewitching sensibility, that I was almost wild ; I was lost in raptures ; I admired her to madness ; I scarce knew any thing I was about.—I should have been quite intoxicated, had I not observed that she was unhappy, and that her spirits were uncommonly fluttered.—She could not eat.—When I led her to the chaise, her hand trembled extremely.

When

When we were seated, I told her, that I hoped she was not so much disordered from any aversion to the journey to Windsor.

No, she replied, with a faltering voice : but what reception can I expect from Lady Wharton, Mr. Brudenel ?

The politest, the most respectful reception you can desire, Miss Hamilton, said I, pressing her hand. —Be assured that I love you too fondly, and esteem you too sincerely, to venture to carry you to my aunt, without being certain of her treating you in a proper manner : and I very much hope that her behaviour will be thoroughly agreeable to you.

My repeated assurances of this kind did not give her the alacrity which I wished to see.—She was silent, for some time, and all my endeavours to amuse her, to raise her drooping spirits, were unsuccessful.

cessful.—At last, I began to be afraid she was fatigued, and asked her if I should order my people to stop, that she might take some refreshment.

She replied in the negative, but added, that she was a very improper person to wait upon Lady Wharton, as her ill health might render her both disagreeable and troublesome.

Nothing can make you disagreeable; nothing can render you troublesome, answered I—You may be quite easy in your mind with regard to your health, on Lady Wharton's account; for I have prepared her to expect an *invalid*; and she will be ready to make allowance for any indisposition under which you may labour.—The change of air, and company, will, I hope, Miss Hamilton, perfectly re-establish your health.

She

She sighed, and seemed greatly embarrassed.—Just before we arrived at Windsor, I eagerly intreated her to make herself quite happy, and to look upon herself at home at Lady Wharton's.—If the smallest trifle, continued I, happens to disconcert you, inform me of it immediately; I will do every thing in my power to exclude uneasiness from your mind.

She thanked me.—We drove into the court-yard.—I led her into the drawing-room in which Lady Wharton and Miss Ellison waited to receive her.

Miss Hamilton and my aunt looked earnestly at each other. I observed, with pleasure, that the dear girl's face glowed with satisfaction while my lady saluted her, and assured her, in a manner equally polite and sincere, (her looks and her voice denoted her sincerity) that

that she was very glad to see her at Windsor.

I reached her a chair, for she was very weak : and as she had looked ready to faint at her entrance, my lady, therefore, called for some tent and toast, and obliged her to eat a bit, assuring her it would refresh her a good deal after her journey.—You have been very ill, Miss Hamilton, Brudenel tells me, continued she ; and you must, with the air, have also a little good nursing.—Lucy smiled, and in a voice which would have charmed insensibility, said, Your Ladyship does me great honour.

We soon fell into conversation. I saw, transported, that Lucy improved upon them, and could have hugged my aunt for her behaviour, which was extremely encouraging, and which pleased Lucy so much, that as soon as we were by ourselves, she thanked me for having

ing introduced her to so amiable a family.

Maria Ellifon is, you know, good-natured, and well bred. Miss Hamilton will, therefore, find a companion of a more suitable age, should she be tired of my aunt's company, who tells me that she far exceeds her highest expectations.—Most men, added she, talk in exaggerated terms, when they mention their mistresses; but you, James, have but barely done Miss Hamilton justice.—There is a modesty in her looks, and a diffidence in her whole carriage, which are exceedingly becoming in so very pretty a young person.—How could any man think of seducing so fine a creature, and so innocent as she seems to be!

I assured my lady, that she was really as amiable as she appeared to be, and that I was happy to find she liked her.

Thus

Thus far every thing goes well; and I begin to hope that all my designs will be successful. My chief anxiety is now on Lucy's account: I am apprehensive of a decline, for both my aunt and Miss Ellison think her much worse than I imagined. My Lady has prescribed asses milk: if that does not prove efficacious she ought, her ladyship says, to go to Bristol.

L E T T E R XXII.

Mr. Bever to Lord Musgrave.

ALL my enquiries have proved vain and fruitless: I can hear nothing about Lucy. She is fallen, I fear, to the lot of some happier man: but by Heaven, if I find him out he shall not long enjoy his conquest—Be it as it will, however, I can no longer bear any place in which I have been accustomed

customed to see her.—Solitude is still worse, as it only serves to feed a devouring flame. How I hate myself for having been such a cursed whining puppy! but I cannot yet shake off this love-fit—I am, therefore, going with a chearful party to Paris in hopes that dissipation may at last stifle feelings which reason has been hitherto unable to extinguish.—When I am arrived, you shall hear again from

Yours

W. B.

L E T T E R XXIII.

Miss Hamilton to Miss Sommers.

I Thank you, a thousand times for your care of me, my dear friend—Your information concerning Lady Wharton was most just. I found her answer exactly the description

description you gave of her—yet she received me in a manner which exceeded my expectations—I know not how to express the pleasure arising from my reception: I had been indeed, so fearful of meeting with a contrary behaviour from her that after the day was fixed I repented of having complied with Mr. Brudenel's request: and I was so intimidated by my own silly terrors that I was scarce able to keep up my spirits during the journey; though Mr. Brudenel said every thing he possibly could to render me easy and chearful. I was also a good deal disconcerted at my first appearing before Lady Wharton, but her obliging manner soon made me feel a self-satisfaction which I cannot describe.

Here is a young Lady, a Miss Ellison to whom Lady Wharton is guardian—Her behaviour to me is very agreeable: she is, without
being

being a regular *beauty* handsome enough to please : she is extremely lively and good humoured : with such company and with Mr. Brudenel's continual attentions I cannot be totally unhappy.—Yet when I look back, a thousand disquieting reflections crowd into my mind and draw deep sighs from me.

Mr. Brudenel, who has, indeed, taken an infinite deal of pains to make me happy, expresses much anxiety to find that he cannot yet succeed entirely according to his wishes : to lessen that anxiety in some measure I attribute the uneasiness which I cannot conceal from him, to the remains of my indisposition : for though I am not absolutely *ill*, I am far from being *well*.—By this mode of behaviour I have diminished his disquietude—He deserves all the happiness it is in my power to give him.—He furnished me with a hundred pound
bank

bank note, that I might provide myself with every thing proper for my appearance here.—I was not a little hurt, Patty, by his genteel, and very considerate *present*, because I wished not to be under such an obligation to him: but I could not handsomely return it—I could not reject it without positively declaring my resolution not to come to this place, and I am now convinced that such a resolution would have been highly imprudent. Yet still this step but paves the way to another: can I remain here, drest out at Mr. Brudenel's expence, and refuse to marry him? by not giving him my hand, after what has passed, I shall injure my character more than I have yet done by the indiscreetness of my conduct.—Besides, whither can I go? and I cannot suppose that Lady Wharton will keep me always with her—No—I see plainly, that

his generous offer is no longer to be opposed—Where is the girl, indeed, who would not be transported at the prospects with which I am flattered? — Why are we destined to love those whom we cannot esteem, and to esteem those whom we cannot love?—However, I will make a vigorous effort to conquer this absurd propensity in favour of a man who is so very unworthy of the slightest regard, and about whom it is almost criminal in me to *think*. Mr. Brudenel is as young: he is reckoned as handsome: he is full as desirous, as diligent to please, and he has behaved to me with the strictest honour and delicacy, why then should I be insensible?—But I am not insensible neither—I feel the warmest gratitude; the sincerest esteem; I look upon Mr. Brudenel as my friend, and have so high an opinion of him, I should not scruple to

to acquaint him with every latent secret of my heart.—I only forbear to mention Bever because I think it wrong to indulge myself in talking of him, and because I would not say any thing to make Mr. Brudenel uneasy; to make him imagine that I am too much attached to him. Indeed, Patty, I study to find out, and I admire, all Mr. Brudenel's good qualities; he improves upon me: he becomes every day more and more amiable in my eyes. Time will, therefore, I hope, restore me to the full possession of my reason, and convert gratitude into affection.

Adieu.

L E T T E R XXIV.

Miss Ellison to Mrs. Catesby.

I Sit down to perform the promise which you exacted from me, my dear Harriet, when you left us. The expected guests have been here some time: but I have not had a moment's leisure to write till now; having been entirely engaged in entertaining them.— I am really pleased with Miss Hamilton: she has, I think, one of the finest faces I ever beheld; and yet she seems not to be at all conscious of her beauty.— Her modesty and her simplicity render her quite charming.— She is in a very declining state of health her complexion, therefore, is pale; but her paleness is not a sickly one; it rather indicates the delicacy of her constitution, than any indispo-

indisposition:—It only serves, indeed, to make her appear more beautiful, in my opinion. — Mr. Brudenel is extravagantly fond of her—she does not seem to be so much in love with him, she takes a great deal of pains, however, to give him pleasure: she studies his taste, accommodates herself to his inclination, and never encourages any other man to flirt with her.—By the extreme propriety of her carriage she gains the approbation of us all.—I particularly admire her behaviour to Lady Wharton: she always appears sensible of her ladyship's superiority, yet she never degrades herself by any gross flatteries or mean submissions — she keeps up her own consequence while she treats my lady with all due respect. — This deportment, though it may not procure her many friends will always prevent her from meeting with contempt.—

tempt. — As you have, already, heard her story ; as you well know that her violent attachment to Bever was the source of all her misfortunes, you will allow that a greater circumspection is required in her than in many others of her sex. — She must marry Brudenel, I think—No woman, but herself, would hesitate a moment about such an offer, and in her circumstances too——If, indeed, she refuses him meerly from a consciousness of not being able to do justice to him by returning his affection, she is, a thousand times, more to be esteemed than those women who marry upon the most mercenary considerations. — I cannot pretend to say whether every man who admires her would carry his passion for her so far as Brudenel does, but there are certainly several men in this neighbourhood who can neither think nor talk of any
 woman

woman except the charming Lucy Hamilton.—You will tell me that I, though of the same sex, am in raptures about her too—I do, in truth, admire her, Harriet: there is an expression in her countenance which pleases me extremely: and were a man to come in my way with a similar set of features I should certainly like *him* as well as I do *her*. Happily, there is no such man to be found, for I have no mind to be in love.—Love is a passion which occasions nothing but disquiet:—Brudenel and Miss Hamilton have, certainly, reason to say so.

Adieu.

LETTER XXV.

*Mr. Brudenel to Sir George Mil-
bourne.*

MY dear Lucy's health begins to return, I think : I think also, that she becomes more sensible of my endeavours to please her—'tis undoubtedly true that she behaves in a most unexceptionable manner in general, and with a particular propriety to *me* ; she has always expressed the sincerest acknowledgment for my solicitude about her, and I flatter myself that she is now as attentive to *me* as I am to *her*.—She is universally admired by every body who sees her, and yet discovers neither vanity nor affectation—It was a lucky thought of mine to bring her hither—Lady Wharton and Miss Ellison are the only persons who are acquainted with

with her story. She passes here for a young lady under the care of my aunt; and as she is very handsome, not a creature is surprized at my being in love with her—she has both a fine voice, and a good ear, and I frequently give her some lessons upon Maria's harpsichord with which she appears to be extremely pleased. — Yesterday she surprized me most agreeably by singing a little elegant ballad, I had played to her three or four times, with great taste.—She will, I see plainly, very soon acquire every polite accomplishment: but her person is sufficiently captivating—As soon as I have secured her consent, I shall be compleatly happy; I shall have nothing to wish for—every hour seems to be more and more favourable to

Your very affectionate friend,

J. B.

L E T T E R XXVI.

Miss Hamilton to Miss Sommers.

I Confess myself vanquished at last.—Mr. Brudenel's perpetual assiduities and the dejections into which he frequently falls, evidently on my account, begin to affect me,—eager to relieve him, from pity, from gratitude—let me add, from love—I have drawn myself in to promise him every thing he can desire.—But let me blot out those improper words, *drawn in*.—Can I possibly do too much for the man who has behaved to me in the most honourable manner; who has been my protector; who is now my friend, my lover?—While I give him an opportunity to gratify his generous propensities, to indulge the unbounded tenderness of his disposition; I shall recover my
lost

lost reputation, and convince my family, that I am not the abandoned creature they have so long believed me to be: I shall have it in my power too, I hope, to return the favours I have received from my dear Patty.

I was just going to dispatch this in a hurry, because I believed it would give you pleasure, when I received a visit from my brother—Imagine my joy.—Had he been in England, my father would not have refused to receive me. My brother always loved me, in spite of all my sister's calumnies against me. I do not pretend to say, that my conduct has been blameless, but I hope that my indiscretions were not censurable enough to merit the cruel treatment I have met with from my nearest relations.

I was so much surprized at the sight of my brother, and so exceedingly rejoiced, that I was almost

deprived of my senses. He was received with great politeness and pleasure by Mr. Brudenel, and with much affability by Lady Wharton and Miss Ellison.

You will wonder, perhaps, Patty, how my brother came to know where I was.—Being extremely uneasy at the unkindness of my father and mother, and despairing of the return of their parental affection, I wrote to them again, as soon as I arrived at this place, and informed them of my unexpected asylum ; and informed them also of every step I had taken to wipe off the slur upon my character, and to procure a desirable alliance ; intreating them to forgive what was past, and to suffer me to return.

I received no answer to my letter.—My brother tells me, that their unrelenting behaviour is occasioned entirely by the envy and jealousy of my sister.—My marriage

riage with Mr. Brudenel will, I hope, oblige my father and mother to change their sentiments with regard to me; and when I am no longer in my sister's way, I hope she will not endeavour to prejudice my friends against me.—That the prejudices of my friends may be totally removed, and that we may soon be happy in each other's society, is the sincere wish of,

Your ever affectionate friend,

L. H.

L E T T E R XXVII.

Mr. Brudenel to Sir George Milbourne.

I Just snatch a moment to tell you, that I am in a fair way to be the happiest of men.—This angel of a girl has consented to be mine: and in the most charming manner

manner to be conceived. She has, indeed, ever since her arrival here, not only conducted herself with the greatest propriety, with a discretion which rendered her innocence indisputable, but she has endeared herself to me more than ever, by applying herself to every thing which seemed the least likely to give me pleasure. She has neglected every body, consistently with good manners, to attach herself entirely to me.

A few days ago I was seized with a violent head-ach, by which I was prevented from mixing in a party of pleasure, obligingly schemed by Lady Wharton, in order to countenance and to amuse Miss Hamilton.—When Lucy found that I was not well enough to accompany her ladyship and her friends, she begged to be excused.—In vain did I insist upon her leaving me to partake of an amusement which might
arise:

arise from a river-expedition in a barge with music.—Instead of complying with my repeated intreaties, she ran to my aunt, and earnestly entreated her not to be offended at her desiring to stay with me, while my indisposition confined me to the house:—You may be sure, Lady Wharton did not oppose a request in which I was so deeply interested: she accordingly left Lucy to act as she pleased. I expressed my acknowledgments to the dear girl, in the warmest terms, for giving me so striking and so winning a proof of her esteem.

With a voice, and in a manner which penetrated my heart, she replied, Do not thank me, Mr. Brudenel, for doing what is meerly my duty.—I owe you more than I can ever repay; and be assured, that your disorder gives me great anxiety; anxiety too great to permit

mit me to receive any pleasure whatever.

Be anxious about nothing, dear Miss Hamilton, replied I; it shall be the study of my whole life to make you happy, if you will but suffer me to spend that life with you.

She threw down her charming eyes, and seemed to be uncommonly agitated for some moments: then, raising them, she answered, with a tender smile, while her face glowed with blushes, As you please, Mr. Brudenel — I sincerely wish that my compliance may in the least contribute to the felicity you promise yourself.

I would not let her proceed, George; catching her in my arms, I made her several times repeat her last animating reply, and declare also, that she did no violence to her inclination by her compliance, before I allowed her to disengage herself.

herself. She at length made a disclosure in my favour, flattering beyond expression.

In this delightful way was I employed, in the garden, when Lady Wharton and Miss Ellison came hastily towards us, accompanied by a young officer, into whose arms Lucy, as soon as she saw him, flew.

Imagine my astonishment.— Having had no time to examine the new visitor, Lucy's precipitation fluttered me extremely, as I could only think of Bever.

My aunt, seeing my astonishment, instantly cried out, Here is Miss Hamilton's brother.

That exclamation relieved me. I hastened to support my Lucy, who seemed ready to sink to the ground with surprize and joy.— She recovered in my arms, and Mr. Hamilton immediately addressed me in a manner which at once drew

drew my attention, and demanded my esteem.—Could I help esteeming the brother of my lovely girl, especially a brother so very much resembling her?—He had a commission given him by a friend of his father's (who is since dead) and is just arrived from Canada. Having enquired after his sister, and heard her story, he hurried to see whether she really deserved the treatment she had met with. He is as modest as his sister; we could not, therefore, without much intreaty, keep him with us.—Here he is, however, and improves upon us every hour: and I am particularly pleased to find that his company gives his sister the highest satisfaction, as she now hopes, by his means, to be favourably received by her family.—But I cannot stay to tell you any more at present. I am continually interrupted.

terraptured. The preparations for my marriage engross every moment I can spare from my Lucy.

LETTER XXVIII.

Miss Ellison to Mrs. Catesby.

I Am going to gratify your curiosity, my dear, if it can possibly be gratified ; for you really have asked me so many questions, that one would imagine you were in love with Brudenel yourself.— If you are, it is too late ; for Miss Hamilton has consented to marry him, and we are all excessively busy in ordering cloaths, &c. &c. —Lady Wharton has got an additional guest upon this occasion, a young officer, brother to Miss Hamilton ; brother in every thing : I swear I never saw two people so exactly alike in person, manners, and disposition. Brudenel is almost

most as much in love with him as with his sister, I think : he says that the Captain is not only one of the finest young fellows he ever saw, but one of the best.—Now, in my humble opinion, Harriet, as you have missed of Brudenel, you had better come and fall in love with his friend. — But why do I write such nonsense ? — Indeed, I am not in spirits. — Perhaps the hurry we are in affects them : perhaps the uncommon heat of the weather makes me rather languid. — I certainly feel myself immensely dull, and incapable of saying any thing to entertain you.

A-pro-pos, on second thoughts, I would not advise you to attempt making a conquest of this fine fellow : I am afraid that he is not easily to be pleased. — I am inclined to think that he looks down with indifference on people inferior to himself in personal accomplishments,

ments, because he is so handsome himself, and because his sister is universally allowed to be a *beauty*.—And yet he is not in the least vain; there is not the slightest tincture of the *coxcomb* in him: he is as mild, as modest as his sister; he has an uncommon understanding, and a very winning address.—However, as I did not take up my pen with a design to write entirely about Captain Hamilton, I shall lay it aside, being too idle to enter upon a new subject.

Adieu.

L E T T E R XXIX.

Captain Hamilton to Mr. Ross.

SINCE my last, I have been made quite easy with regard to my poor Lucy.—She has fallen, very luckily, into honourable hands.—A young man of family
and

and fortune met her, when she had made her escape, rescued her from farther violence, and afterwards put her under the protection of his aunt Lady Wharton at whose house I found her. Lady Wharton gave me the politest reception: she is a very agreeable woman, and has a young lady under her care who is particularly amiable; my sister speaks of her in the highest terms, she seems to have a refined understanding: and her vivacity is quite delightful—she is not absolutely a beauty, but there is something extremely attractive in her person. The affability of her behaviour, and the elegance of her address are inexpressibly alluring: her voice is exquisitely melodious, and all sentiments are most significantly articulated—We pass our time here deliciously—To increase my satisfaction I have reason to believe that I shall, in a few weeks

weeks see my sister Mr. Brudenel's wife.—What a happy termination will *that* marriage be of an affair which has given me, you may imagine, from what you have heard relating to it, the most cutting uneasiness.

L E T T E R X X X .

Miss Ellison to Mrs. Catesby.

DON'T laugh at me, dear Harriet; but I am really afraid that your raillery is too well pointed: yet if I *am* in——What am I going to say——but——Supposing I *do* think him the most amiable man I have ever met with, I will not I assure you act in opposition to my reason——What has reason to do, when so pretty a fellow is under consideration, you will say—Why, certainly, love and reason are often at variance, but
my

my pride will bring me off.—The Captain is a man of no birth, no fortune : his relations are people whom nobody knows, and he himself is only a subaltern officer in a marching regiment.—Oh !—He's not to be thought of—So far pride—But—on the other hand—He is a fine, tall, handsome young fellow with a bewitching pair of eyes, with a very insinuating tongue, and with a captivating address. — There is dignity and grace in his whole appearance ; in a few words, he looks, and moves, and speaks like *a man of fashion*.

Does he admire *you* as much as *you* do him ?

Fye, Harriet : how can you suppose me capable of admiring any man breathing ? — Yet — as to captain Hamilton—Why—I really can't say ; — come, to confess the truth, I am very sorry I know nothing

nothing of the matter—No woman, I suppose, can be sorry for having admirers: we are all ready to like the love, though we despise the lover: but I must be a very strange character indeed to despise such a man as this: and yet, as I said before, he is not a man for *me* to think of—However, I have not answered your question, whether I am particularly distinguished by him?—He is polite, respectful, and attentive.—Can you add no more?—Are you not satisfied, Harriet?—Well then, he now and then *looks* at me, with his expressive eyes, in a manner which would make me fancy a great number of strange things, were I addicted to vanity.—I will not give way to the flatteries of imagination; they will only create a thousand more delusions—and so, good night.

L E T T E R XXXI.

Capt. Hamilton to Mr. Ross.

WELL then, my friend, I honestly subscribe to your opinion—I am, actually, in love with Miss Ellison: but when I begin to reflect seriously upon this certainty I feel an anxiety which I cannot express.—Anxiety, you will tell me, is natural to a lover; it is indeed inseparable from the *tender passion*—Love cannot exist without disquietude: I should not feel it as I ought without the tremors and apprehensions of which I am continually sensible whenever Miss Ellison moves or speaks: and yet, Harry, I so carefully disguise my feelings that she cannot possibly, I think, discover them.—Sometimes, indeed, I have been vain enough to imagine that she
treats

treats me with particular favour :
 to be favoured by Miss Ellifon——
 Heavens ! what immense delight!—
 And yet I may be mistaken—
 Where is the man, Harry, who does
 not, sometimes, entertain flattering
 ideas ?—She receives my assiduities
 to oblige her, apparently with
 great satisfaction—(Assiduities due
 to her as an agreeable woman,
 as an intimate friend of Lady
 Wharton who has heaped so many
 civilities upon my sister) and even
 seems to return them, by her
 singular attention to me—No, I
 cannot be mistaken. She not only
 recommends her books to me, but
 furnishes me with them—She pre-
 sents nosegays to me of her own
 tying up, and even honours me
 with her hand in a dance when
 I am very sensible that another has
 been solicitous about it to no pur-
 pose.—What conclusions am I to
 draw from all this behaviour ? surely

not discouraging ones—All these distinctions, however, and many more have been frequently paid by a lady when she has a mind to attach a man to her service, though she may not, at the same time, have the slightest regard for him. Vanity and coquetry are powerful stimulations in some women:—But though there is an uncommon, I may add, an enchanting vivacity in Maria, I never observed an unbecoming propensity to flirt in her.—Vivacity is the most agreeable apology imaginable for those little flights of the imagination which are by pride too frequently misconstrued and in a malicious manner.—Maria, in short, has, in *my* opinion, every charm to win a heart, and to keep it.—Did I but dare to aspire to the possession of *hers*, I should be the happiest fellow in the universe.

Adieu?

L E T-

L E T T E R XXXII.

Miss Hamilton to Miss Sommers.

PATTY, my dear Patty, why do you not come to London that I may pay you my personal acknowledgments for all your friendship which will ever be gratefully remembered by your Lucy, whose felicity hourly increases with her affection for her amiable Brudenel? Indeed, my dear, I begin to find that I love him as tenderly as I ever did the unworthy Bever: his fine person, his improved understanding, his benevolent heart, and his extreme tenderness have entirely won me—There is not a wish in my heart which he does not gratify; and very often before I can articulate it. Observing my anxiety at the continued neglect of my father and mother,

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he desired my brother to write again to them, and in the strongest terms to persuade them to be reconciled to me. As to their taking me home now he declared to me this morning that he could not hear of it, and that as Lady Wharton was so very desirous of my staying with her till our marriage he hoped I would not wish to leave a place in which he could see me perpetually.

I replied that I had no will but his, and that I should regulate every hour of my future life agreeably to *his* inclination, thanking him, at the same time, for his hint to my brother, as I thought he would himself be more pleased to take a woman countenanced by her parents, than a poor outcast from her family.

What endearments did not this approbation of his behaviour gain me? they raised up blushes, indeed,
in

in my face, yet they gave me a heart felt satisfaction of which I never had been sensible before, for they were bestowed upon me with a delicacy as peculiar to Mr. Brudenel as they were flattering to *me*. I now know perfectly the difference between the man of honour, and the libertine, and sincerely wish I had been acquainted with it before: but as I have been so fortunate as to meet with a man of Mr. Brudenel's disposition, I hope to be also received again by my parents, and then all will be well.

In Continuation.

YOU will be pleased to hear what sort of a reception I have met with from my parents. In answer to my brother's letter in which he informed them that I was going to be married in a very short time, and insinuated how much better it would be both for

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them,

them, Mr. Brudenel and myself, if they would see me before the day of marriage, backing his intreaties with the strongest reasons he could think of to render them successful, they permitted him to bring me to them.

I was very much affected at the thoughts of appearing before such severe judges. Mr. Brudenel, perceiving my agitation, kindly offered to accompany me, to defend me, he added, from any insult which might be levelled at me.

When we arrived in——Street my brother led me into the parlour.—Mr. Brudenel followed.—I trembled to such a degree that I could scarce stand.

It was some time before my father appeared ; when he entered the room, I fell on my knees before him, and implored his pardon.

He raised me, with a stern look, and bade me be better than I had been—

been—I could hardly assure him I would, so much was I interrupted by my tears.

When my mother came in—she had ever been a kinder parent than my father, and never would have shut out her child, though an offending one, had she not been overpersuaded by him and my sister.—When my good mother came in, she lifted me up, and embraced me most affectionately.

I then asked to see my sister.

When you have atoned for your past misbehaviour, said my father, by making a good wife to this gentleman, pointing to Mr. Brudenel, you shall see my daughter Caroline, but till then you must not look upon her as your sister.

I was hurt, Patty, at this prohibition (am I then still so very culpable?) at a time when I had so sincerely repented of my erroneous

proceedings ; I thought it an unkind one ; it made me uneasy.

Mr. Brudenel, ever attentive to the least change in me, caught me in his arms, and placed me in a chair : and, as I was ready to faint, he made me lean on him : I did so, and watered his bosom with my tears.

As soon as I recovered, he desired me to let him conduct me home—I consented, without hesitation, for I wished to go, yet knew not how to take leave of my mother ; who, seeing my concern, kissed me again, and prayed to God to bless me.—I thanked her sincerely, and returned to this place, half-pleased, half-vexed, with my reception in London.—Mr. Brudenel discovered no small disquiet on my account, and said every thing in his power to comfort me.—I think, indeed, there is the greatest prospect

prospect of happiness for me: I am sure I never expected to be so happy; but I will endeavour to deserve my felicity.

LETTER XXXIII.

Captain Hamilton to Mr. Ross.

I Have played with my inclination for Maria in such a manner, that I have played myself into a passion for her.—I am all in the wrong: I must never think of her: But who can always act precisely with that discretion to which we ought always to adhere in our commerce with women, especially with women so uncommonly amiable as Miss Ellison is.—I have been strangely off my guard; I have been too precipitate in my operations—Like a foolish moth, I have made too near approaches to a flame, which, if I do not make a

timely retreat, will consume me.—
 I must rouse myself: I must conquer what can only, indeed, be deemed a failing, because it is impossible for me to expect a victory agreeable to my wishes. And yet I sometimes fancy, that I am encouraged to advance—Nay, I am not altogether a fanciful fellow; I am sure she smiles on me; how then can I forbear to admire, when she condescends to approve.—Let me tell you, Harry, there is an honest openness of mind, a frankness in this Miss Ellison, which makes me absolutely adore her: her manners are so engaging, and there is such a *naïveté* mixed with her vivacity, that what she says, though apparently resulting from deliberate and refined reflection, seems to come from her with as much ease as if she had not thought about it.—There is also such a brilliancy in her features, tempered with so much

much benevolence, gentleness and candour, that, while we admire, we are insensibly drawn in to love. Aye, to love with a tenderness which she only can inspire. In short, I have never, among the variety of women with whom I have conversed, met with one so totally pleasing as Miss Ellison.—— Some I have admired for their faces, others for their forms; some for their wit, others for their good-nature; but Maria Ellison surpasses them all—she is, in few words, *Cælia all together*.

However, though I am certainly struck with her at present, I think I could, by absence, and by employing my mind on other matters, conquer this violent prepossession in her favour, if I did not imagine, foolishly perhaps, that she looks upon me in the light I behold her. —She appears to be actually attached to me: I can give you some instances

instances of her partiality to me, which you will allow to be of the animating kind. She addresses herself continually to me in conversation, and prefers the party I happen to be of to any other: She speaks highly of me behind my back, and very handsomely of me before my face: She invites me to walk with her, to read to her, to sing with her; takes every opportunity to compliment my talents, and to display her own.—When I talked, t'other day, of leaving Windsor, thinking that I might, by making a longer stay, be numbered among the *intruders*, and being well assured that I could not stay without committing an indiscretion, she even seemed to forget her situation in the house, and openly, before the whole family, though she blushed while she was so employed, pressed me to continue with them; nay, insisted upon it.—

it.—How I felt, you who have been in love may easily imagine—It was with the greatest difficulty that I restrained myself from catching her in my arms, and thanking her.—But I only acted the *Indifferent*, and turned away my face, though I actually blushed at being believed capable of so much insensibility. Yet I could in no other way endeavour to hide a passion which became too ardent to be concealed.—I had a still greater trial to go through ; for, pained, I suppose, at my awkward behaviour, she looked down, abashed for having so much importuned a man so entirely inattentive to her ; but, presently recovering herself, she said, You will not stay with us then, though ever so much intreated.—I was going to reply, perhaps in a very improper manner : some company, however, came in, and saved me from any farther

farther confusion.—I still continue here.—I cannot bring myself to leave Miss Ellison : I therefore endeavour, by a sort of an affected carelessness, to conceal feelings which positively distract my peace.

L E T T E R XXXIV.

Miss Ellison to Mrs. Catesby.

I Am actually quite ashamed of myself. I have behaved in such a manner to Captain Hamilton, that I don't know what he will think of me. To what lengths will not folly, when not properly corrected, carry us? And yet can I be justly charged with folly, for admiring the merit of such a man as Hamilton? Should I not rather be guilty of stupidity, were I insensible to it? What then can make me condemn myself for discovering

covering so great a prepossession in his favour ? nothing but the censure of the world, and the uncertainty of his thinking as well of me as I do of him.— Sometimes, 'tis true, I fancy I discern the strongest proofs of an inclination for me in him, and this imaginary discovery has drawn me on, almost imperceptibly, to give him encouragement, to let him see, at least, that he is by no means an object of indifference in my eyes.— Were he, however, to take advantage of this part of my behaviour, ought I not to be offended ? — undoubtedly. Would not Lady Wharton, and all my friends be offended ? — with reason. Can an union with Captain Hamilton be proper for me ? by no means : it must not be thought of.— How can I make any apologies for my conduct, after having pressed him to stay here, when he was on the point of leaving

ing us? I had no right to solicit his continuance with us; it was not my place to urge him to postpone his departure. — I now wonder at myself, and am altogether astonished to think how I could behave with such a deficiency of consideration: what opinion can he entertain of me? he must either imagine that I am really fond of him—(which heaven forbid)—or he must set me down for one of the most finished flirts in the kingdom. — Of all characters, a flirt is detestable beyond expression: I will make haste, therefore, to let Hamilton see, that I am not the trifling creature he may take me to be. — Write to me speedily, and tell me whether you do not approve of this resolution in the behaviour of,

Your very sincere Friend,
M. ELLISON.

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LETTER XXXV.

Captain Hamilton to Mr. Ross.

TO what purpose have we a fruitful imagination, if we are to be deceived by it, to be tormented by it; to be led by it into a labyrinth of errors? How could I be so vain, so silly? how could I be such a consummate coxcomb as to fancy that a woman in Miss Ellison's sphere of life would cast a thought upon *me*?—That behaviour which I, puppy like, attributed to a prepossession, &c. &c. could only arise from her good-nature, or from a propensity to divert herself with my self-sufficiency.—To her good-nature I am rather inclined to impute it; for she is certainly too amiable to amuse herself by imposing upon any body.—I have always made a distinction

tion between vivacity and flirtation, though a flirt may be a very lively character. Miss Ellifon's vivacity entirely results from a happy flow of the animal spirits, without being accompanied by vanity, which is generally occasioned by the preponderance of self-conceit in the human composition, and will make its appearance in people of both sexes, who have not a grain of genuine vivacity. — Miss Ellifon has not only a good head, she has also a good heart : her sprightliness, therefore, cannot but be at all times highly agreeable, and never deserving of censure. — If I have committed a mistake, by aspiring to the possession of so valuable a woman, I must endeavour to correct my error, by keeping a proper and respectful distance for the future.

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In Continuation.

I Have opened my letter to tell you, that this change in my carriage is not the thing ; it will not do.—Maria seems to be less pleased with me than she was before ; yet she treats me with civility and good humour ; she looks, however, rather serious, and reserved. The vivacity which was so enchanting is vanished ; her eyes no longer meet mine, beaming with their usual lustre, occasioned by her happy sensations : they are either averted from me, or they seem to search into the inmost recesses of my heart ; a heart which must for ever be hers alone, whatever change may be in her behaviour, or however indifferent I may appear about her.

L E T-

L E T T E R XXXVI.

Miss Ellifon to Mrs. Catesby.

I Am vexed with myself, vexed with Hamilton, and out of humour with every body.—What business had he to make a thorough change in his carriage, because I thought it necessary to alter mine? Is there no medium between love and aversion? Supposing him to have no particular attachment to me, why should he behave in such a neglectful manner? Civility is due to every body; I have reason, therefore, to expect my share of it.—Yet, by the singularity of his behaviour, either way, I am convinced that he thinks more about me than of any other woman: for he treats all other women with an equal politeness, but at the same time with an equal coolness. I cannot,

cannot, I own, unravel the mystery of this proceeding, and wish you would do it for me. In the meanwhile, I shall resume my former chearfulness, at least in Hamilton's sight: it will be proper, I think, for me to hinder him, if possible, from seeing that I take notice enough of him to remark the sudden changes in him.—I cannot, however, entirely shake off the reserve which his apparent indifference has occasioned. My spirits too are so depressed, I know not why, that I fear I shall not be able to exert the few abilities I have to entertain him. But I will make a violent effort.—How very difficult, how very disagreeable it is to appear easy, when you are really quite discomposed.—It must be done—I fly to make the experiment. Adieu.

LET-

L E T T E R XXXVI.

Miss Ellison to Mrs. Catesby.

I Am vexed with myself, vexed with Hamilton, and out of humour with every body.—What business had he to make a thorough change in his carriage, because I thought it necessary to alter mine? Is there no medium between love and aversion? Supposing him to have no particular attachment to me, why should he behave in such a neglectful manner? Civility is due to every body; I have reason, therefore, to expect my share of it.—Yet, by the singularity of his behaviour, either way, I am convinced that he thinks more about me than of any other woman: for he treats all other women with an equal politeness, but at the same time with an equal coolness. I cannot,

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LET-

L E T T E R XXXVII.

Captain Hamilton to Mr. Ross.

I Actually begin to give up all my penetration, and fairly confess that I know nothing about Miss Ellison. She is now become the same easy, chearful creature she was before, when I first saw her: she is always good-natured and polite, but not particularly to me, either one way or the other. My sister is to be married in a few days, and then I must take a final leave of Maria, I suppose.—This reflection is by no means an agreeable one; and though I appear [destitute of sensibility upon this occasion, I fear I shall stand in need of all my philosophy, to support such a separation. Yet, let me consider what were my principal satisfactions before I knew this amiable woman—

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I was never so happy as when I was contributing to the felicity of others, totally regardless of my own.—Let now my sister's present and approaching happiness (a happiness so very unexpected) engross my thoughts.—Let it detach me from all selfish considerations, and render me studious only, by all the gratitude in my power, to convince Brudenel, and his family that I am not insensible of the favours which they are continually heaping upon my sister, who has for some time been incapable of doing justice to her generous lover.—May they long enjoy together the happiness they deserve, while I, by time and absence, endeavour to weaken the impression made upon me by Maria.

Adieu.

L E T T E R XXXVIII.

Miss Ellison to Mrs. Catesby.

NEXT Thursday is to be the decisive day : Lucy and Brudenel are then to be united. You may be sure that I shall assist at the marriage, as well as the amiable Captain. He has left us for a day or two, but returns again in consequence of Lady Wharton's and Brudenel's repeated invitations, who are both pleased with his company. I was neuter in this affair, though strongly tempted to discover my wishes : but discretion has taken the lead once more in my bosom, and will, I hope, notwithstanding some thwarting propensities, bring me off victorious.

I have been most affectionately invited by Brudenel and his Lucy to go with them into Somersetshire,

shire, and Hamilton's company has been earnestly requested. — If we should happen to be in the same house again now — I am not sure that he will accept of the invitation, nor have I any business to know whether he will or not: I have no occasion to regulate my motions by his. — Let chance direct us. — After all, supposing we should meet again, what harm will there be, in the name of wonder, to converse with a man who has a cultivated understanding, and an elegant taste; who is not only sufficiently well bred to be very agreeable, but who is also every way worthy of esteem. By associating with the virtuous, we acquire virtuous habits; by listening to men of sense, we improve our own minds, and strengthen our powers for conversation. — I declare, Harriet, I look upon Hamilton to be as good as he is accomplished: am

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I not therefore safe? Virtue is more apt to create esteem than love: and I shall discover neither understanding, taste, nor virtue, if I do not set a high value upon real merit, wherever I find it.—After this declaration, I shall venture to trust myself with Miss Hamilton's brother.—She herself is the most amiable of women; she now loves Brudenel sincerely, but shews her tenderness with a modesty and delicacy, which charm me nearly as much as they do him. Her person also improves; her mind grows more and more at ease. Brudenel, indeed, thinks that her health is not thoroughly re-established; but her beauty is heightened, in my opinion, by the languor sometimes spread over her elegant face.—She is a lovely woman: is she not the sister of Hamilton?—need I say more? Yes, I must.—They have excited my resentment — I'll tell you

you how : by informing me in what a scandalous manner the old Hamiltons and Caroline (particularly the latter) behave. They either neglect Lucy entirely, or express their doubts perpetually with regard to her deserving the good fortune she is on the point of enjoying.—Caroline, neither in person nor disposition, bears the slightest resemblance to Lucy or to her brother.—Envy, the predominant passion in too many minds, seems to have extinguished all natural affection in her breast, and she is perhaps as miserable a being as ever existed, merely because her sister is in a fair way to be one of the happiest of her sex.—Whenever I see, or hear of Miss Hamilton, I cannot endure the thoughts of being, in any shape, related to her.

L E T T E R XXXIX.

Captain Hamilton to Mr. Ross.

G I V E me joy, Harry: my dearest sister is happily married to the most amiable of men.—Nothing can add to my felicity but another event of a similar nature: an event, however, which must not be thought of.

This charming woman—you know whom I mean—accompanies them to Lime-Park, Brudenel's estate in Somersetshire, to which place I am obliged to follow them.—I shall offer great violence to my inclination, you may be sure, by waiting on the happy pair.—I modestly, however, repeated my *nolo episcopari* in form, the third time, without any fear of being distanced for want of farther pressing.—
Maria, the lovely Maria, smiled
appro-

approbation, when she heard I was to be of their party ; at least, I fancy so — I am therefore so much engaged in my little expedition, I must hasten to bid you farewell.

P.S. Brudenel, ever attentive to my sister's honour, as well as her happiness — (is not every woman's happiness connected with her reputation ? I am sure it ought to be) — Brudenel, I say, will come to town, and carry my sister himself to see her father and mother : they were invited by Lady Wharton to Windsor (Lady Wharton has behaved most kindly to my sister and to her family :) they came once, but declined being present at the marriage, on account of the incidental expences with regard to cloaths, &c. &c. — They acted prudently enough by so doing ; but if they treat not their daughter with

the respect due to her as Brudenel's wife, I shall be exceedingly chagrined at their behaviour.

L E T T E R XL.

Mrs. Brudenel to Miss Sommers.

I Received your letter of congratulation, my dear Patty, for which I am ready to pay my best acknowledgments, and only have to wish that you were a little nearer that I might pay them in person. But to shew you, my dear friend, that I shall ever remember, with gratitude, your extreme kindness to me when I so much wanted it; I must beg you to accept of the little box with which this letter is accompanied, and which contains the entire furniture of a tea-table from Mr. Brudenel, and a piece of flowered muslin from me for a negligee. Pardon me for sending such trifles,
and

and only look upon them as proofs of my friendship; my generous Brudenel would have dispatched far more valuable things, had he not, with me, imagined that difficulties might have been started on your side about the acceptance of them.

As you ever discovered the sincerest regard for me, my Patty, and have exerted yourself more than once in my favour, you will, I am certain, be rejoiced to hear that I am one of the happiest of women. Mr. Brudenel's tenderness for me seems to increase every hour, as does my unfeigned affection for him. No man can be more deserving of a woman's love. No man can do more for a woman than he has done for me. May that all-gracious being who sent him to snatch me from ruin, make me every day more and more worthy of him, and may he ever continue to love me as truly and as

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tenderly as he does at this moment,

Your ever affectionate and grateful friend

LUCY BRUDENEL.

P. S. When we are settled at *Lime-Park* I will write to you more at large. Miss Ellison, the agreeable Miss Ellison, favours us with her company, and my brother, yielding to my Brudenel's solicitations, has agreed to spend some time with us.

Again, my dear friend,

Adieu.

L E T T E R XLI.

Mr. Brudenel to Sir George Milbourne.

I Am married:—I am happy; you cannot, therefore, expect a long letter from me at present. Have I not, indeed, in a few words, said every

every thing? Were I to begin to expatiate upon the charms of my Lucy's person, mind, and manners, I should take up the longest day without coming to a conclusion. She now loves me—what can I desire more, but to see her health perfectly restored? my uncertainty with regard to *that* frequently gives me pain, tho' the dear angel assures me she is well, and endeavours, by numberless winning ways, to convince me that she is entirely happy. May I ever have it in my power to make her so. There is not a woman in the world more deserving: till I married her I did not, could not know half her excellencies. What a lovely person has she, and what a lovely mind! How enchanting are her manners, how delicate are her endearments, and with what a charming modesty does she receive and return my careffes! How uncommonly fortunate was I

to meet with a woman so exactly
 suitable to my taste! and what a
 wretch must Bever have been to at-
 tempt to give such a woman a mo-
 ment's uneasiness! Let it be my
 part then to make my Lucy large
 amends for all that she has suffered.
 Her health has been undoubtedly
 impaired by the scandalous treat-
 ment which she received from her
 dishonourable admirer, and by the
 remains of affection which she for
 some time felt for so unworthy a
 man, even after he had behaved in
 so very exceptionable a manner.
 His insinuating carriage made so
 deep an impression upon her gentle
 heart, that, young and unexpe-
 rienced as she was, it is no wonder
 she should long retain the passion
 with which he inspired her, and
 which she has now transferred to
 me with interest.—Will you not
 come down to us? while I thank
 you for your cautions upon my first
 ac-

acquaintance with Mrs. Brudenel
(How blest am I to call her so!)
I will effectually convince you that
never were cautions less necessary.
I will also convince you, if possible,
than no man in the marriage-state
is happier than

Your very sincere friend,

J. BRUDENEL.

P. S. You must make haste, or
you will not see me before I to
Bristol.

L E T T E R XLII.

Miss Ellison to Mrs. Catesby.

Lime Park.

I Cannot imagine why I ventured
to come to this place, as Ha-
milton was to be of the party. I
never considered, that as Brudenel
and his Lucy are so tenderly at-
tached to each other, I should be
left very often with this dangerous
man

to meet with a woman so exactly
 suitable to my taste! and what a
 wretch must Bever have been to at-
 tempt to give such a woman a mo-
 ment's uneasiness! Let it be my
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L E T T E R XLII.

Miss Ellison to Mrs. Catesby.

Lime Park.

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to come to this place, as Ham-
ilton was to be of the party. I
never considered, that as Brudenel
and his Lucy are so tenderly at-
tached to each other, I should be
left very often with this dangerous
man

man. We are, indeed, continually together; and he so far takes the advantage of it, that he seizes every opportunity to improve his time in our *tête à tête*: he endeavours, most assiduously, not only to make himself more agreeable, but more estimable. His personal graces grow more attractive as he is less fettered by restraint, and as our friends frequently contrive to favour our private interviews, he discovers, during the course of familiar conversation, sentiments which, from the delicacy and justness of them, are highly to be approved of. He is so extremely solicitous to strike out occasions to give me pleasure that I will not attempt to say with what consequences his assiduities may be attended. I am actually quite frightened when I think of *consequences*, as I often feel myself too much affected; and did not my natural vivacity often come to my relief

relief and help me a little, I cannot tell what would become of me.

—Whenever our conversation begins to turn upon a tender subject I presently summon my spirits to my assistance, and by a sudden recollection throw a different meaning upon the words which I had just before delivered; by which dexterous proceedings I make the poor man look as if he had made very wrong calculations concerning me. I have also recourse, sometimes, to other *finesses*, and yet, will you believe me, Harriet? I am so sorry, afterwards, for having played them off, and so out of humour with myself, that I am, involuntarily, impelled to endeavour to make my admirer some amends for the chagrin he feels from my irregular behaviour to him, by a number of new *civilities*—not to call them kindnesses—fully sufficient to
let

let him see that I am far from being the *indifferent* I appear to be. Besides, the part I have obliged myself to act is so unnatural, that I fear I must give it up, or I shall, certainly, make some egregious blunder, which will entirely undo what I have been doing. There is but one remedy : a remedy which you, or any body else as well acquainted with the true state of my heart, might easily point out.—That is, Flight.—But oh ! Harriet ! were you in *my* situation, you would, I will venture to say, find it much easier to *give* advice, than to *follow* it. And so

Adieu.

L E T T E R XLIII.

Capt. Hamilton to Mr. Ross.

Lime Park.

LONG ago should I have left this place; and I have frequently intended to leave it; but I find myself absolutely rooted here, and incapable of making the slightest effort to stir, the smallest attempt to regain my liberty.—Maria has, indeed, fixed me, unalterably hers.—I allow that it is madness to think seriously about her; yet I cannot possibly bring myself to think of any other person: equally unable am I to bestow a thought on my business, my family, or my friends—you excepted, to whom I can talk of her perpetually.—I have, indeed, the satisfaction to see that Lucy is happy: the mutual tenderness which I observe between her and her husband gives
in-

inexpressible joy to my heart. Lucy is, if I have any judgment, perfectly qualified to make a *good* wife in the *best* sense of the word. I never knew her guilty of a fault till she eloped with her *first* lover : and that fault might have been partly occasioned by a *first impression*, as she is of a gentle nature, and as her feelings are uncommonly fine. Ever ready is she not only to pity the sorrows of a fellow-creature in distress, but, sympathetically, to share them.—By consenting, therefore, to comply with Bever's request, she was, most probably, actuated by humanity, compassion, and gratitude. Believing that she was sincerely beloved, she could not help wishing to return a passion which appeared to her, not only innocent, but laudable : and as she, from her natural ingenuousness, suspected no deceit, she was the more easily deluded.—How many
 poor

poor unfortunate females have been undone under the direction of sentiments which, as they are truly noble, ought to inspire those of our sex, to whom they are addressed, with the most honourable sensations. How very worthless is the man who avails himself of the credulity of an amiable artless creature, whose affections he has gained; and who, being innocent and defenceless, more particularly demands his assistance and protection. — How cruel is it to lay snares for a virtuous *innocent*, and how generous to guard her virtue against the base attempts of those who employ all their arts to destroy it! — If young girls having unfortunately too much tenderness and sensibility, on the one hand; and, perhaps, a little vanity and indiscretion, on the other, commit a faux-pas, should they be abandoned by their relations, and driven to infamy? how unjust

unjust are the proceedings of such relations. *My* sister's case was singularly pitiable : as she had actually preserved her virtue, tho' she had risked the loss of her character, she merited the greatest lenity and consideration. Had she not, by a very remarkable stroke of good fortune, fallen into the hands of Brudeneel, she might have been, ere this time, perhaps, quite lost, from the unkindness of her parents.—However, while I am accusing *them* of a glaring impropriety, let me keep a guard upon my own conduct.—Yet tell me, my friend, is it possible to defend one's heart against such a woman as Miss Ellison, especially when such a woman gives me all the reason in the world to believe that she is not *indifferent* about me? It is not only her civility, it is not only her flattering politeness by preferring me as a companion to all other men; her intelligent glances,

glances, her speaking silence, her rising blushes, averted eyes, and half-smothered sighs—I cannot be mistaken—The more she endeavours to conceal her sensations in my favour, the more apparent they are. I cannot be mistaken—I hope I *am* not : for the pleasure resulting from my conjectures is—not to be expressed.

L E T T E R XLIV.

From the same to the same.

I Was not, could not be mistaken. —When two persons mutually feel the same passion, they soon come to an *eclaircissement* about their sensations.

Brudenel gave a concert the other night : it was followed by a ball, at which the neighbouring families assisted.

During

During the performance of a very pathetic song, extremely applicable to my present condition, my eyes were fixed on Maria very tenderly, and expressed, perhaps, the situation of my heart as well as if they had been accompanied with the most eloquent language. *Her* eyes, dear girl, perfectly understood the meaning in mine, and returned glances which filled my soul with ravishing delight.—At last, as if afraid of trusting herself any longer to the indulgence of such enchanting looks, she instantly threw all that laughing levity into her countenance which renders her, at times, so uncommonly pleasing, and asked me some questions totally foreign to the entertainment before us, with a vivacity which made her appear a quite different, though not a less lovely, creature.

Some lovers now would have been disgusted at such a behaviour ;
they

they would have thought that their mistresses were errant flirts : but I looked upon the sudden change in Maria as a piece of refined address. —She was actually fearful of directing her eyes towards me in too tender a manner, and could only keep her emotions under by a thorough alteration in her features, which gave new beauties to her face, I thought ; and she at the same time discovered the most delicate sensibility, as *ascemens* I had not noticed before. To such a woman a man must, necessarily, be constant ; he cannot help finding all the various powers of charming peculiar to the sex, in *her*.

I danced with her afterwards, and as I was apprehensive that we might be observed, I took care to treat her with a respect sufficient to exclude all improper constructions upon our behaviour. With *my* behaviour she seemed to be very well pleased,

pleased, and continued her vivacities during the evening; though I felt her hand, every now and then, tremble in mine. — Every tremulous motion of that hand convinced me that her partiality in my favour was considerable. — But to what purpose do I give way to these delicious sensations? I cannot indulge the most enchanting of all passions, without injuring, it may be, the dear object of it. — Let me, therefore, reflect a little, and not suffer self-love to get the better of the sincere and lively concern which I feel for the happiness of this most desirable woman.

LETTER XLV.

Miss Ellison to Mrs. Catesby.

WHAT will become of me, Harriet? This Hamilton improves upon me every hour; nothing

thing but flight, as I have already said, can save me; and flight is not in my power: for Mrs. Brudenel is going to Bristol, and I cannot refuse to accompany her, as she is a stranger to the customs of the place, and compliments me by saying, that my company is particularly agreeable to her. You may be sure I am flattered by such a confession from her; the more so, as she is the sister of Hamilton:—He is to meet us at Bristol; indeed, he dedicates his whole time to me, and grumbles at every thing which separates us, though for ever so short a time.—Has he then made a formal declaration, you will ask? —I hasten to reply in the negative. —Heaven defend me from such a trial of my discretion!—For what can I say to him, should he *declare*? —But I will not think of it—I cannot, to tell you the truth, without being extremely fluttered.—

And I am really in so great a flutter, at this very instant, that it is impossible for me to proceed in rational stile.—I have but just composure enough to desire you to send your letters to me here, that they may be forwarded to me at Bristol in Brudenel's packet.—I forgot to inform you, that we had Sir George Milbourne with us for about ten days. — When Hamilton is not by his side, he may be reckoned an agreeable man, by,

Yours, most affectionately,

M. ELLISON.

L E T T E R XLVI.

Mr. Brudenel to Sir George Milbourne.

TH O' I want no addition to my felicity, but the thorough re-establishment of my Lucy's health, yet your approbation of my choice

choice gives me more pleasure than I can describe. My Lucy is the loveliest of all creatures; so beautiful, and so good; and then so exquisitely kind, so delicately tender: but I am deprived of a great deal of my satisfaction, by fearing that she should really be in a decline—My dear angel smiles at my apprehensions, and tells me that they only proceed from my excessive affection for her.—Well, let it be so—I hope she is right—indeed, I scarce think it possible that she can err; like Milton's Adam, I think all she does, “seems wisest, virtuouslest, discreetest, best.”——Yet there can be no harm in a Bristol-journey — Miss Ellison is so obliging as to accompany us. Hamilton will attend her in the chaise, for I cannot bear the thoughts of being separated from my Lucy, lest Maria, though she is exceedingly affectionate to her, should omit any

K 2 thing

thing that may, in any shape, contribute either to her pleasure or convenience.—'Tis impossible for any body to be so tenderly watchful over her as I am.—Besides, tho' I am very fond of Hamilton, both on account of his own great merit, and for his sister's sake, to ride with a man is a stupid affair, especially when I have so excellent a companion in my Lucy, to whom I must now hasten.—You will therefore make all due allowance for the shortness of this, and write to me at Bristol.

L E T T E R XLVII.

Mrs. Brudenel to Miss Sommers.

Bristol.

I Can hardly excuse myself for having so long delayed to write to so good a friend, and therefore do not expect you to pardon me :
but

but when I tell you, that I have been very much engaged in attempting to return Mr. Brudenel's numberless acts of generosity and affection, by entertaining his friends, you will, I am sure, make some allowances for me; and I flatter myself that I have, by this apology for my silence, rather merited the increase than the diminution of your esteem.

After a journey, during which Mr. Brudenel did every thing in his power to render it agreeable to me, I find myself very pleasantly lodged here: yet, had he not been so anxious upon my account, it would have given me more pleasure to remain at Lime-Park, as Mr. Brudenel's house is most delightfully situated, and as there is every thing in it to make life desirable. The gardens are laid out in a charming taste, and the park commands a great many fine views.

—Indeed, my Patty, happy with Mr. Brudenel's love, I could reside in so elegant a place, without a single wish to be removed to any other ; nor do I think that my health will be mended by a regimen different from that into which I have entered. Mr. Brudenel is so extremely careful about me, he is perpetually consulting my appetite ; he insists upon my retiring at an early hour ; he will, on no account, let me rise before I express an inclination to be up, and obliges me to rest longer than usual after any little excursion from home ; so that I do not see what can be done more for me—nor is there the least occasion for me to be so circumspect ; for though I am not so robust as some people, it cannot be said that I am in a bad state of health. I am not quite well, 'tis true, but neither am I at all sick : and I dare say,
that

that if I had remained at the park in the same regular course of life prescribed to me here, I should have been in as good a way : but it is my pleasure, as well as my duty, to conform to Mr. Brudenel's desires upon every occasion. I can never make him returns adequate to the favours which I have received from him ; but I can shew my gratitude by perpetual endeavours to please him, and by complying with his every wish : — I therefore make no opposition to any thing he proposes, being very sure that he will propose nothing disagreeable to me. — However, I had rather have remained at home, as I might then have hoped to enjoy my Patty's company with me for some weeks. — After the long and uninterrupted friendship which has subsisted between us, can you wonder at my eagerly desiring to have you partake of my

happinefs, as well as to be an eye-witnefs of it?—As to my own family, my brother only feems to receive any fatisfaction from my marriage : my mother would, I am certain, be extremely pleafed with it, did not my fifter, envious of my good fortune, ftill fet her and my father againft me.—Time, I hope, will reconcile my parents to me, and make them fenfible of the obligations they are under to Mr. Brudenel, for his very great confideration for their daughter. — If you fee them, my dear friend, be fo kind as to hint fomething of this kind (they may take it better from you than any body elfe.)— And pray let me exprefs my acknowledgments to you, in perfon, at Lime-Park, as foon as I return from this place.

L E T-

L E T T E R XLVIII.

Captain Hamilton to Mr. Ross.

WHAT a temptation ! and yet I swear, I believe I should have spoken, should have been undone, had I found it possible to articulate a single syllable of the business : but only think how I was situated ; to be pent up in a post-chaise, side by side, with my *Adorable*, and yet not to tell her that I loved her !—My tongue was chained up by fear—I was afraid of offending her : more afraid of injuring her, by supposing her inclined to feel prejudices in my favour ; but I was still more apprehensive of being thought to have a design upon her fortune : add to all these fears and apprehensions a timidity, for which I can no way account, and then you will no longer be surprised

prized at my silence. But though my tongue uttered nothing, my eyes spoke a great deal, and my active hands were continually employed ; sometimes encircling her waist, to support her while the chaise was too violently agitated by a sudden concussion ; sometimes putting up or letting down the window, to exclude or to admit the air, as she found herself differently affected by the atmosphere.—Sometimes, during my little endeavours to render her ride quite agreeable to her, I touched her, inadvertently, when I reached over to the opposite side of the chaise, and once almost sunk down on her lap, the softest, sweetest resting-place imaginable. She smiled, and blushed, but kindly assisted me in recovering my seat. In return, I seized her snowy hand to thank her, and I held it in mine till we came to the end of our stage.—It
was

was indeed, now and then, withdrawn, but I some how caught it again, and by degrees she became so habituated to its situation, that she seemed to be not in the least disturbed about it.—I enjoyed my happiness without any interruption, yet this little journey has made a considerable revolution in my mind : I shall never be the composed, indifferent fellow I was before. — She talked, she laughed, she even sung, at my intreaty, and so divinely that I was absolutely intoxicated, and on the point of saying what I might have remembered with regret to the last moment of my life.—Heaven defend me from such another journey : there is nothing like a *Duetto* in a post-chaise for blowing up the flame of desire in the coldest breast. — I thought I loved Miss Ellison before, as much as mortal man could love a woman, but I had not then been in a

post-chaise with her.—This small excursion has imperceptibly brought on such an intimacy between us, that if we are not *lovers*, we are certainly more than *friends*. But to be truly serious, Harry—the subject requires seriousness——If Maria was not so much my superior in point of fortune, I should not hesitate a moment about the declaration of my sentiments, because I could not be charged with being under the direction of mercenary motives.—But be it how it will, I fear I must speak, or die.

L E T T E R XLIX.

Miss Ellison to Mrs. Catesby.

Bristol.

THANK heaven, we are arrived here—What a journey have I had?—how have I been charmed, yet how provoked?—I never

never will trust myself again with a man — I mean, such a man as Captain Hamilton, in a post-chaise — for so many hours at least. He has looked and talked, Harriet, till I am almost out of my senses : and then his touch ! — Yes, Mrs. Catesby, he held my hand in his, till my head almost turned round. Well, my dear, dear creature, it does not signify talking ; but if he should ask me any tender questions—pride away, I shall certainly give a favourable answer. — After all, child, should I not act ridiculously, to sacrifice my happiness to vanity ? — With *my* fortune, I am willing to believe, that I could make a rational, honest man and myself very happy ; and what would I have more ? — Will a greater number of houses than I can possibly inhabit, a greater number of servants than I can possibly employ, and more cloaths than I
can

can wear ; will gilded chariots, silver and gold filks, and glaring jewels, give me felicity with a man whom I do not, whom I cannot love ? — Why then should I refuse the man whom I can love, and who may be made wretched for life by my refusal ? — I will please myself with thinking that he would be extremely unhappy if he saw me united to another. — Why then, to gratify the inclinations of other people, should I render both him and myself miserable ? If Hamilton had been a low-bred man, I could never have liked him ; and as to his birth, I don't see any mighty difference between us. — A well-bred, sensible, good-natured man is surely the man for a husband, in whatever sphere fortune has thought proper to place him. — How many women can I name, who are wretched with their titles ? and how many men of rank
and

and family are there, as foolish and as vicious as the lowest of their domestics?—So far in favour of my Captain. — But then there are other objections; for I think that a woman cannot reflect too much before marriage. — I wish, indeed, that Hamilton had an independent fortune, were it ever so small; because I don't like his profession: I never admired soldiers; the generality of women, I know, think them the prettiest fellows in the world, on account of their scarlet cloaths and cockades.—I pay more regard to the man than to his dress; and almost tremble when I consider that this pretty creature, to whom I have taken such a fancy, is no better than a murderer.—What horrid ideas rush into my mind!—Yet how many men, Harriet, are there who, though no soldiers, have destroyed more of our sex than of their own? — I cannot help

help hating the bloody corps. No woman more highly esteems a man of true courage, yet I detest sanguinary beings in all shapes : and is not he to be ranked among the butchers of the world, who, without the slightest provocation, falls upon his fellow-creatures in a neighbouring kingdom, while he who commits the greatest havock among them, is honoured with the highest encomiums, distinguished among the heroes of the age, and almost stunned with the shouts of the multitude ?—— Now, all prejudice apart, my dear Catesby, tell me whether you do not think a man who murders another merely for pay, is little better in fact, than a hired ruffian : yet, from my soul, I believe that Hamilton has nothing of the ruffian in his disposition ; but having been brought up in the military school, has adopted sentiments of, and perhaps acquired

acquired feelings, very different from those who have been educated in an opposite manner.—

Of all men, I cannot help having the strongest objection to a soldier for my husband : I know I shall appear very selfish, and appear to you in a light by no means patriotic (to make use of a fashionable word) but, as a woman, I must own, that if I am ever married to Hamilton, I shall not be pleased to have him sent from me on a sudden ; to have him doomed to a long absence from me : and I should actually shudder to think of his being exposed to the greatest danger, hazarding his own life, and promoting the destruction of people who never offended him.

—I tell you again, therefore, that I do not chuse to be a soldier's wife.

—I cannot possibly subscribe to the principles of the *camp*, and consequently should have very little satisfaction

tisfaction with an *heroic* husband. Matrimonial happiness entirely arises from a similitude of sentiments : without that similitude, in general, the marriage-state can never be productive of felicity.—But this is not all—supposing Hamilton *not* to be in the army—I cannot reconcile myself to his family.—What narrow minds must his father and mother have, to give up such an amiable girl as Lucy for the first fault ; even when she had exerted herself sufficiently to resist the man she loved : not only to resist him, but to fly from him, after she had lost her reputation?—By dreading the loss of character, how many poor young creatures are driven to ruin ? how many tender-hearted thoughtless girls are drawn in, by their sensibility, to grant their lovers every favour requested by them.—When it is too late they see their errors, and would give their

their lives to retrieve their honour.

—Then surely is the time, if their repentance is sincere; then is the time for an affectionate parent, or a discreet friend, to save them from farther temptation, to provide for them a decent asylum, in which they may be kindly treated, and rendered thoroughly sensible of the very material difference between virtue and vice; of the happiness resulting from a constant adherence to the former; of the certain misery which always accompanies a steady attachment to the latter.—How cruelly have Mrs. Brudenel's relations acted with regard to her? who, however, indiscreet, has not, surely, been criminal.—Had they taken her home at once, the little bustle which her elopement had made might have been hushed up, and all would have been well.—Such relations, therefore, I cannot commend—I cannot think of calling
them

them *mine*.—Why, O why, Hamilton and Lucy are ye so very different from the rest of your family?—Yet, let me not expostulate, but rather rejoice that there are two such perfect beings whom I may admire, whom I may esteem—There I must draw my line.

Adieu.

L E T T E R L.

Mrs. Brudenel to Miss Sommers.

Bristol.

I Am so fluttered, my dear, that I scarce know how to guide my pen. I wish we had not come hither: but what signifies wishing? It was not in my power to hinder this journey, nor prevent the cause of the uneasiness I at this instant feel.—I am innocent indeed; but I am truly unhappy.

Yesterday,

Yesterday, on my entering the rooms, the first person on whom I cast my eyes was Bever : yes, Bever, by whose injurious treatment I suffered so much ; and by that treatment should have for ever lost both my character and peace had not Brudenel, providentially, appeared as my deliverer. — How grateful am I to heaven for the protection I enjoy by being united to that amiable man. — Yet, when I reflect upon past scenes, I tremble to think with what consequences this meeting may be attended : I am exceedingly distressed.

When I came into the rooms I had Miss Ellison by the arm : my brother was next to *her* : luckily, Mr. Brudenel was, that morning, gone to call upon a sick friend, who arrived here but last night, and sent to desire to see him. — Luckily, I say, because I am distracted with the thoughts of an interview between

tween him and Bever. The moment I set my foot within the door I saw Bever : I felt my face in a glow.

He started, and almost threw down three or four people in hurrying towards me.

I would have gone out again directly, but my surprize was too great to permit me to do any thing.—I stood like a statue, though I felt my knees knock together.—Neither my brother nor Miss Ellison happened to observe me : they were speaking to each other about something which had, I suppose, attracted their attention in a farther part of the room.—Maria, turning her head carelessly, and seeing me (as she afterwards told me) engaged with a gentleman, left me to follow my brother.—I was, thus, alone, (that is without any of my friends near me) with Bever, who accosted me in a precipitate manner

ner, and expressed the highest joy to see me again.—He hoped, he said, that I had forgot all past disagreeable occurrences; adding, that he had been in search of me ever since I flew from him, that he was transported at the unexpected sight of me, and he doubted not but he could settle every thing to my entire satisfaction, for the future, between us.

I heard him, Patty: but I only gave him a hearing: I was too much surprized, too much disconcerted to reply: I suffered him indeed, merely because I was so embarrassed that I knew not how to act properly, to hold both my hands in his, while I stared with stupidity at him.—At length, I began to recollect my scattered spirits, and hastily withdrawing my hand, told him, with all the haughtiness I could assume, that he was mistaken in me, as I was not the person he took me to be.

How?

How ? replied he, again seizing my hands, in spite of all my endeavours to prevent him, Are you not my dear Miss Hamilton ?

I told you, Sir, answered I sharply, you were mistaken.—My name is Brudenel : you can, therefore, have nothing to say to me.

I cannot, possibly, describe his astonishment at this reply, Patty.—He started back several paces, let my hands drop, which he had before grasped so fast that I could, no way, disengage them, and said, with a look and voice, fully expressive of his feelings, Why surely you can't be married ?

I *am* married, Sir, replied I ; happily married, and under the protection of the best of husbands : I, therefore, insist upon your taking no farther notice of me.

I had just presence of mind sufficient to enable me to pronounce these words : I then, turning instantly

stantly from him, heard him cry, Distraction!—But I never looked back till I came up to my brother and Miss Ellison, who seeing me with a frightened countenance, asked me, both of them, what was the matter?—I had neither spirits nor voice to acquaint them with the real cause of my fluttered appearance; and therefore accused a large Pomeranian dog, the favourite of a lady of quality, who had rushed into the room, of having thrown me down. There was something of truth in my answer; I am not indeed fond of evasive answers upon any occasion, but surely I am not obliged to give an account of myself to any body except my husband; and it is better, I imagine, not to communicate to him any thing which may tend to make him in the least uneasy.—I hope this Bever will never speak so again.—I wish I had not seen him,

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Patty ;—yet, believe me, I was in no other shape affected at the sight of him than by being filled with horror.—I have not yet recovered myself enough to write a longer letter —Pray pardon me for not making an addition to it by this post : you may depend upon hearing again soon from

Your ever affectionate, ever
sincere friend,

L. BRUDENEL.

The END of the FIRST VOLUME.



